Strength in Weakneſs MANIFEST:

IN THE

LIFE, Various Trials, and Chriſtian Teſtimony of that faithful Servant and Handmaid of the Lord,

ELIZABETH STIRREDGE,

Who departed this Life, at her Houſe at *Hempſtead* in *Hertfordſhire*, in the 72d Year of her Age.

Written by her own Hand.

Shewing her pious Care and Counſel to her Children, and according to their Deſire, made Publick: Alſo for the Inſtruction and Benefit of many other Parents and Children concerned.

Prov. xxxi. 13. *Who can find a Virtuous Woman?* &c.

Verſe 30. *A Woman that feareth the Lord, ſhe ſhall be praiſed.*

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BRITISH MUSEUM

A

PREFACE

Concerning the AUTHOR, and following BOOK.

AS the Memory *of the* Juſt *is* bleſſed, *ſo there is a* Juſtice *due to their* Memories, *who* walked *in the* Path *of the* Juſt, *(which is as a* ſhining Light) *and are the* Bleſſed who die in the Lord, who reſt from their Labours, and their Works follow them, *to their everlaſting Reward in the Kingdom of Heaven: Or for the* Example *and* Admonition *of them they leave behind. And that is either by publiſhing their own*

Memoirs *of their* Lives (*when they leave any*) *which is* Inſtructing, *and often not the leaſt* Edifying; *or elſe by ſupplying that where wanting, in* Commemorating *them otherwiſe, according to the Example of Holy Scripture, even concerning* Women *as well as* Men; *the* firſt *of which is done in the following Relation, written by an* early Diſciple *of Chriſt in this Goſpel-Day of her* Labours *in it, and* Sufferings *for it*; *and ſo the leſs need of the* latter, viz. *to ſay much of the* Author; *her own Book being a* ſufficient Memorial *of her, and what ſhe was in her Day*; *only as a* neceſſary Introduction *to her* own Account, *I have this in ſhort to premiſe concerning her.*

I knew her, and was acquainted with her many Years, being my Country-Woman; *and I have this Teſtimony lives in my Heart concerning*

cerning her, That she was a Religious exercised Woman, *always seeking the* best Things, *and thro' the Goodness of God,* found him whom her Soul loved. *An* Honest, Sincere, Tender Hearted, Zealous Woman *for* God, *and* underwent many deep Exercises inwardly, *and also* outwardly *by reason of contrary Spirits who opposed the Work of the Lord, and Testimony of Truth in his Servants and Handmaids, with whom she was often concerned, and bore a faithful Testimony as the Lord laid it upon her, and made Way for her, being a serious weighty concerned Woman in her Spirit, a true Mourner in* Sion *for the* Abominations of the Times, *and she had a solid savoury Testimony for the* Truth, *which she receiv'd early, and was faithful and diligent in it according to her Gift,*

and

and was well received and eſteem'd for her Service by the honeſt hearted in and about Briſtol, *and* Chewmagna *in the County of* Somerſet, *where, and in the Counties adjacent, her Service moſtly lay; till ſhe, and her Huſband and Family removed to* Hempſtead *in* Hertfordſhire, *in the Year* 1688. *where ſhe was well received, as by the following Teſtimonies appear. And ſhe uſed to come to my Houſe at* London, *when ſhe came to the* Yearly-Meeting, *and I was often comforted in her ſavoury Teſtimony, and to find that the Lord's Preſence was ſo freſh with her, in her latter Days. And after ſeveral Years Abode at* Hempſtead, *and Labour and Service there, and thereaway, ſhe* died in the Lord, *and laid down her* Head in Peace, *in a good* Old Age,

Age, *in the Year* 1706. *and of her Age* 72. *and is undoubtedly* entered *into* Reſt.

And as for the following Papers, *written with her* own Hand, *in* Relation *to her* Life, Labours, Travels, Exerciſes, Tryals, Service, *and* Sufferings, *with Deſire they ſhould be Publiſhed after her* Deceaſe, *for the* Benefit *of her* Children, *and others: They were ſome Time ſince put into my Hand to peruſe, as falling moſtly within the Compaſs of my* Knowledge; *eſpecially that Part in Relation to her* Sufferings *and* Impriſonment *at* Ivelcheſter, *(I being then a* Priſoner *there for the* Teſtimony *of* Truth) *in the Time of the* great Impriſonment *for* Meetings, *&c. in the Year* 1683. *ſhe being taken at a Meeting at* Chewmagna, *with near Thirty more, and ſent to Priſon by that wicked*

Perſecutor *(and* under Sheriff *of the County)* John Helliar *of* Briſtol, *at the Inſtigation of the* Prieſt *of the Pariſh; both which were ſoon after* cut off by Death. *The ſaid Prieſt* Croſs *immediately thereupon, in a very remarkable Manner, as is herein related, Pag.* 131. *And the ſaid* Helliar, *not long after being ſmitten with great Terror and Horror of Mind for the Violence he had committed on the People of God in that City,* &c. *keeping Men to watch with him Night and Day* for fear the Devil would fetch him away; *as I have been credibly informed he expreſſed. As another great Perſecutor there* [R. Oliffe] *who had made much Spoil on the ſaid People, as I heard, crying out he was* Damned, *and that they ſhould make* Reſtitution, *i. e. to them he*

he had wronged, which he was never able to do; and ſo both died miſerable, *and ſeveral others.*

Such a thrifty Trade *(ſays one)* is Perſecution, that it leaves Men never a Friend in Heaven, or on Earth. *Oh that others would take* Warning *in time by ſuch* Examples *of* Divine Vengeance, *to avoid ſuch Things, and* do no more ſo wickedly. *For as* the Memory of the Juſt is bleſſed, *and* the Righteous ſhall be had in everlaſting Remembrance, *ſo* the Name of the Wicked ſhall rot; *and wherever* Helliar's *Name is mention'd, it* ſtinks, *as all* Perſecutors *do.*

And according to Deſire, I have for the Truth's Sake, *and the* Reſpect *I had to her, and owe to her* Memory, *carefully peruſed and put in Order the following* Relation; *which I have been*

Comforted *in Reading of, being very* Solid, Serious, Weighty, *Matter of* Experience, Warning, Exhortation and Counſel, *written in a good Senſe and Underſtanding of the Things of God, and Myſteries of his Kingdom, and very* Sound *and* Savoury *in the Expreſſion of it. To which is added a ſhort* Supplement *of the laſt Fourteen Years of her Life; collected chiefly from her Son's Account; with an* Epiſtle *to Friends, and a* Warning *to others, formerly printed; all which I doubt not will have an* Anſwer *in every* Conſcience *of ſuch as read it in the* Fear of God; *and hope it may be of* Service *to her* Poſterity, *and* Benefit *of others; and that it will tend to the* Glory of God, *and the* Comfort *and* Edification *of his People; to whoſe Peruſal, in much* Love *and* Sincerity

cerity *I recommend it, and all to the* Grace of God, which is able to build them up, and give them an Inheritance among them that are ſanctified; *which is the ſincere Deſire of, Reader,*

Thy Real Friend,

John Whiting.

London, the 21ſt of the 2d *Month*, 1711.

A Teſti-

A TESTIMONY *from ſeveral Friends belonging to the Meeting at* Hemel, Hempſtead, *and the Parts adjacent in the County of* Hertford, *concerning* E. Sterridge, *the* 8th *of the* 3d *Month*, 1711.

OUR Dear Friends *James* and *Elizabeth Stirredge*, came here to Inhabit about the Year 1688. whoſe Coming into theſe Parts was ſeaſonable, and we believe ordered by the good Providence of God; for it had a good Tendency to the Strength and Edification of Friends; for ...ut that Time, ſome were buſie to

to weaken Love among Brethren, under ſpecious Pretences of Liberty, *&c.* But the ſaid *Elizabeth* being gifted for the Miniſtry, and acquainted with the Wiles and ſubtile Devices of the Enemy, was made a ſerviceable Inſtrument in our Defence and Preſervation; being attended with Power, Wiſdom, and true Zeal, for the Proſperity of the Truth, and People of God. She was ſound and ſavoury in her Doctrine and publick Miniſtry, and tender and affectionate in Chriſtian Advice and Counſel, to the Comfort of the Afflicted and exerciſed in Spirit; declaring, that the Way to the Kingdom of God is through Tribulation; agreeable to the ancient Account we read of in Holy Scripture. And ſhe did frequently preſs Friends to S:

cerity and Uprightneſs of Heart. And altho' the Lord had given her a large Gift, and a good Utterance, ſhe was not forward to appear in her publick Service; but as an immediate Concern came upon her, ſhe was a good Example in her frequenting *Meetings*, both on the Firſt and Week Days; and was there often made Inſtrumental to the ſtirring up of the pure Minds of many, by Way of Remembrance, to our mutual Comfort, by her freſh and living Teſtimony.

Her Huſband alſo, (who departed this Life ſome time ſince her Deceaſe) was an Honeſt Zealous Friend, and her Fellow-helper in the Work of the Lord, (in his proper Gift) and our true Friend and Brother; and they were both very near and acceptable to Friends here, and here-

here-aways. But what ſhall we ſay? (the Lord having called them to his Reſt in a good Old Age) but earneſtly deſire (as they frequently did) that the young Generation might come up in Faithfulneſs, and fill up the Rooms of all ſuch (being thereunto ſpirited by the Lord) that his Name may be more and more known, and glorified to all ſucceeding Generations, World without End, *Amen.*

Our ſaid Friend *Elizabeth Stirredge*, departed this Life at *Hempſtead* aforeſaid, on the 7th of the 9th Month, 1706. and was buried in Friends Burying-Ground at *Wood-End*, in the ſaid Pariſh.

John Edmunds, | *Michael Tirpin*,
Moſes Weſt, | *Michael Tirpin*, jun.
Edmond Neale, | *James Stirredge.*

John

John Thornton's *Account of his Neighbour*, Elizabeth Stirridge.

I HAVING Opportunity by Dwelling in *Hempſtead* ſeveral Years before ſhe departed this Life, had an intimate Acquaintance with her; and as the Lord had given her a Meaſure of his Holy Spirit, to guide, lead and direct her in the Way of Peace; he alſo gave her a large Talent in a publick Teſtimony, in which ſhe was very ſerviceable in our Meetings; being attended with Power, Wiſdom, and true Zeal; ſo that her Teſtimony was ſound and ſavoury, to the Comforting of the upright Hearted; ſhe being many Times drawn forth to encourage the

the exerciſed and afflicted in Spirit, and lead to declare, that the Way to the Kingdom of God is through Tribulations. And alſo would frequently preſs Friends to Upright-heartedneſs, Sincerity and Integrity. She being alſo a good Example in her Converſation. And altho' the Lord had given her a large Gift in a verbal Teſtimony, yet ſhe was backward to appear therein, except ſhe found it was immediately required of her. She was zealouſly concerned againſt that Spirit that led into Separation and Diviſion, and alſo againſt all manner of Deceit and Hypocriſy. She commonly had a ſharp and piercing Teſtimony againſt ſuch that the great Enemy had ſo miſled. She was a diligent Frequenter of Meetings, both on Firſt and

Week

Week Days. Her Huſband alſo being an Honeſt and Zealous Friend, and ſince her, departed this Life; they being both ſerviceable to Truth and Friends, are miſſed. But what ſhall I ſay? The Will of God be done; for fully ſatisfied am I, that they are gone to Reſt, and entred into Joy and Happineſs, where all Sorrows ceaſe, and Tears are wiped away.

John Thornton.

John

John Neale's *Teſtimony Concerning* Elizabeth Stirredge.

IT is in my Mind to write ſomething as a Teſtimony concerning my dear and well-beloved Friend *Elizabeth Stirredge*, deceas'd.

She was one who received the Truth in the Love of it, in her young Years, as I have heard from her own Mouth, and as in her following Book is more fully related, wherefore I need ſay no more of that, but deſcend to write ſomething concerning her, during the Time of my Acquaintance with her, which was about Fifteen Years.

She lived for that Time about Seven Miles from us, and ſometimes

times would come to Viſit our Meeting at *Watford,* whom I, and many more were glad to ſee, ſhe being one whom the Lord was pleaſed to beſtow a Talent and Gift of the Miniſtry upon, (which he is pleaſed to give unto both Male and Female, they being all one in Chriſt Jeſus) that ſhe might tell unto others, what God had done for her Soul; for thoſe, (and thoſe only are they) whoſe Mouths the Lord openeth, that do and ſhall ſhew forth his Praiſe. And indeed her Teſtimony was reaching and affecting; my Heart hath been well affected many Times in Meetings with her Teſtimony, for ſhe ſpoke as one having Authority, almoſt to Admiration, conſidering the Weakneſs of Body wherewithal ſhe was pretty much afflicted; but the Lord was with her,

her, who giveth Strength to the Weak, and his Power was her Support.

It was her Lot many Times, when ſhe came to our Meeting, to lodge at my Houſe (my dear Mother *Hannah Neal* and ſhe being very intimate Friends, and heartily loving each others Company) and indeed her Company I alſo loved, for it was pleaſant and delightful to the Honeſt-hearted; and I may ſay, her Diſcourſe was edifying to me.

And I have been affected to hear her give an Account of the Sufferings, deep Trial and Exerciſes of Friends, which ſhe, and many others went through in early Days; how when they were going to a Meeting, they went as it were in Peril of their Lives, by reaſon of wicked and ungodly People throwing Stones, Clods,

Clods, and other Things at them. And altho' many were they that roſe up againſt them, yet how wonderfully did the Lord preſerve his People in that Day, thro' many Tribulations; many of which various Exerciſes and Trials, that divers of our worthy Ancients paſſed through, bleſſed be the Lord, we in this our Day are freed from.

Much might be ſaid concerning this our Friend; but in ſhort, ſhe was a valiant Woman for Truth on Earth, a Mother in *Iſrael*, and a worthy faithful Elder in the Church of Chriſt in her Time.

And now my Deſire is, that we who are of a younger Generation, and are yet left behind, may in our Meaſure be found treading in the Steps of this, and many others of our Ancients, who

who have ſerved the Lord faithfully in their Generation, and are removed from us.

Tho' our Loſs of ſuch Worthies be great, yet their Gain is far greater; for doubtleſs they are entred into thoſe Manſions of eternal Bliſs, where Joy unſpeakable and full of Glory is their Portion, and that for evermore,

John Neale.

Concerning her Husband James Stirredge, *by the ſame Hand.*

HE was a Man with whom I was well acquainted for many Years; and I may ſay of him, he was an honeſt upright-hearted

hearted Man, one that feared God and eschewed Evil; Zealous for the Honour of God, and for the Promotion of his Truth on Earth; a hearty Lover of Faithful Friends, and in his Conversation amongst Men, I think I may say blameless.

A Zealous Man for Monthly and Quarterly Meetings of Church-Government; his Desire was, that Friends in such Meetings, might so wait upon the Lord to receive Counsel from him, as that they might act in the Wisdom of God, that every thing that is contrary to the Principle of Truth might be kept out of them, and that nothing but Truth might have the Preheminence.

In fine, he was a Meek-Spirited and Lowly-minded Man, more in Substance than in Shew.

Concerning her Huſband.

I went to Viſit him in his laſt Illneſs, when he was very weak in Body, ſo weak, that he ſpake very low, but very ſenſible, and was in a good Frame of Mind and Spirit; ſo that I was refreſhed in my Viſit, and he was pleaſed to ſee me.

He was very patient under his Affliction, and I believe was fully reſigned to the Will of God.

He departed this Life in the Tenth Month, 1708. at *Hempſtead* in *Hertfordſhire*, and was Buried at Friends Burying-Ground at *Wood-End*, in the ſame County.

John Neale.

STRENGTH

STRENGTH in WEAKNESS

Manifeſted, &c.

SEEing the Lord hath been pleaſed to count me worthy to travel in *Sion's* Way; and ſeeing I have found the Way ſo ſtrait, and ſo narrow, and ſo many that have been called; and ſome, that have entered into it, have gone into By-paths, and crooked Ways again; and I have found the bleſſed Effect of keeping in the right Way; therefore I have a great Concern upon my Spirit, for my Children, that are coming up after me, that they may not be forgetful of keeping in the right Way, whenſoever the

Lord ſhall be pleas'd to take me from them.

Therefore it is in my Heart, as my Heavenly Father will be pleaſed to aſſiſt me, to leave a ſhort Teſtimony behind me, for my Children, of the Paſſages of my Life, ever ſince I had a Remembrance; and the Goodneſs of the Lord to me all my Life long, unto this very Day, which is worthy for ever to be had in Remembrance, above all that ever my Eyes beheld, and in Reverence to the worthy Name and Power of the Lord is it ſpoken, and he ſhall have the Praiſe of his own Work for ever.

In the firſt Place, I was 1634. Born at *Thornbury* in *Glouceſterſhire*, of honeſt Parents; my Father's Name was *William Tayler*; my Father and Mother were People fearing God, and very zealous

lous in their Day; and my Father (being one of thoſe called *Puritans*) propheſied of Friends many Years before they came; he ſaid, *There was a Day coming, wherein Truth will glorioufly break forth, more glorious than ever ſince the Apoſtles Days,* but ſaid, *I ſhall not live to ſee it*; he died in the Faith of it Seven Years before they came; whoſe honeſt and chaſte Life is often in my Remembrance, and his fervent and zealous Prayers amongſt his Family, are not forgotten by me. My Parents brought me up after a very ſtrict manner, ſo that I can truly ſay, I was much a Stranger unto the World, and its Ways.

In my tender Years I was one of a *ſad Heart*, and much concerned and ſurpriſed with *inward Fear*, what *would become of me when I ſhould die:* And when my

Lot was to be near any that would Talk rudely, or Swear, or be overcome with ſtrong Drink, I dreaded to paſs by them; and when I did hear it Thunder, Oh the Dread and Terror that would fall upon me; I would get to the privateſt Place that I could, to mourn in Secret, thinking the Lord would render Vengeance upon the Heads of the Wicked. When I ſaw the Flaſhes of Lightning, Oh! thought I, whither ſhall I go to hide my ſelf from the Wrath of the dreadful and terrible God? Thus was I poſſeſſed with my Soul's Concern, before I was Ten Years of Age; I was ſo filled with Fears and Doubts, that I could take no Delight in any Thing of this World. And when I grew up to riper Years, I went to hear thoſe accounted the beſt Men, that lived up to what was made known unto them,

them, and I delighted to hear them, and be in Company with them that talked of good Things, and diſcourſed of Scripture, and of God and Chriſt, and of Heaven's Glory; Oh! how delightſome was it unto me; but ſtill I was unſatisfied, becauſe I found I was not a living Witneſs of theſe States and Conditions that the People of God were in, in former Days; and how to attain unto it, I did not know. Then did I mourn unto my ſelf, and ſay in my Heart, Oh! that I had been born in the Days when the Lord ſpake unto *Moſes*, and unto the Children of *Iſrael*, and with a high and wounderful Power brought forth his People out of *Egypt*, and through the Red Sea, that I might have known how to have walked in the right Way, and to have done what the Lord

would have required of me, and been in acquaintance and familiarity with my Maker; that I might have known when I had pleaſed or diſpleaſed the Lord, whom my Soul loved, but knew not how to come acquainted with him. Oh! what would I have parted with for the Enjoyment of the Lord, and Aſſurance of Salvation? Surely, if it were poſſible for me to have enjoyed all the World, I could freely have parted with it for Peace, Comfort and Satisfaction for my poor diſtreſſed Soul, that mourned as without hope; and many a Time, and many Hours have I been alone, reading and mourning, when no Eye ſaw me, nor Ear heard me, neither could I find Comfort in Reading, becauſe it was a Book ſealed unto me. Then did I Mourn, and ſay, Oh! that I had

been

been born in the Days when our bleſſed Saviour Jeſus Chriſt was upon the Earth; how would I have followed him, and ſate at his Feet, as *Mary* did; how freely could I have left my Father's Houſe, and all my Relations, for true Peace and Aſſurance of Life Eternal for my Immortal Soul.

And under this Exerciſe I grew very ſad, inſomuch that my Mother feared I was going into a Conſumption, and greatly fear'd my Death; and would ſay unto me, *Canſt thou take Delight in nothing? I would have thee walk forth into the Fields with the young People, for Recreation, and delight thy ſelf in ſomething.* And to pleaſe her, I have ſometimes, when we were out of our Employment, gone forth with ſober young People; but I found no Comfort in that. Then I fell into a Cuſtom

of reading the Scriptures, and to be alone in private, Reading and Crying, becauſe I knew not that Heavenly Power and Spirit to have Dominion in me, that was in them that gave forth the Scriptures; and nothing elſe but the Subſtance would give me true Satisfaction, therefore the Scriptures was but a Book ſealed unto me.

Then did I fall down upon my Knees to pray unto the Lord, with my Heart full of Sorrow, and the Tears running down my Face, and could not utter one Word; which ſeem'd very ſtrange unto me, and ſet me on thinking, that there was none like unto me. But it was the Enemy's Work, to perſwade me there was none like unto me: And becauſe I could not pray in Words, as others could, and likewiſe under Afflictions,

Afflictions, therefore the Lord had no Regard unto me. But the Enemy is a Lier, as ever, for the Lord was near me in every Exerciſe, and broke my Heart, and melted my Spirit, or elſe it would not have been ſo with me. Oh! my Soul can now behold his Goodneſs, for he was near me, although I was not aware of it; for I thought none was ſo miſerable as I, the Enemy endeavouring to caſt me down, and to make me deſpair. And truly it was the great Mercy of the Lord in preſerving me from it, for my Affliction was great, and my Diſtreſſes very many, the Enemy following me with his Temptations; and for want of right Information where my Strength was to be found, which was to have *ſtood ſtill*, and have waited upon the living God for Strength to overcome

overcome my Soul's Enemy. And inſtead of ſo doing, the Enemy ſo diſturbed me, and ſo follow'd me with his ſubtile Alurements, ſometimes to draw my Mind into the Vanities of this World, and to delight in bedecking my ſelf in fine Clothes, that I might appear comely in the Eyes of the World; *for* (ſaid the Enemy) *as for this Way of Sadneſs and Trouble that thou art under, it will redound to no Advantage, Benefit, nor Comfort; thou wilt not be in any Eſteem amongſt thy Neighbours; therefore take thy Pleaſure, and be at Reſt.* A Lier he is, and ever was from the Beginning; and my dear Children, believe him not, if it be your Lots to be under Temptations, or Exerciſe of any Kind; or what way ſoever the Lord may be pleaſed to lead you in for the

Trial

Trial of your Faith and Patience in any kind, either now, or any Time of your Pilgrimage in this Life. I ſay, the Enemy will befool as many as he can; therefore look unto the Lord, and keep him in your Remembrance, and Pray unto him in the Inward of your Minds, although you cannot utter one Word; know it aſſuredly, that he is near to help his afflicted Children at all Times, as they ſtand in need of him. Oh! that I had known this in the Days of my Ignorance, and in my young and tender Years, when the Lord was near me, and at work in my Heart, and I knew it not; for want of an Underſtanding, the Enemy befooled me, and led me aſide into thoſe Things abovenamed; and by hearkning unto him, and the young People who were my Neighbours, in perſwading

ding me, that it would be of great Benefit to me, for I was young, and knew not what I might come to; and I was left of my tender Father, and hardly any Friend was left me; and in my Diſtreſs and Afflictions, willing to have a little Reſt and Comfort, I lent out an Ear unto the Enemy of my Soul, and let my Mind go forth after fine Clothes; but when it was drawn out, it went without Limit; and when I bedecked my ſelf as fine and as choice as I could, it would hardly give me Content; for when I had one new Thing, when I ſaw another, or the third, I was as deſirous as for the former; ſo ever unſatiſfied. Oh! the lying Enemy, who promis'd me Reſt and Peace, but could not give it me; a Lier he is, and ever was, my Soul hates him, and is at Enmity with him,

him; the Lord preſerve me out of his Snares, and my Houſe alſo for ever.

But though he had drawn out my Mind, the Lord did not leave me; for I had many Times a Concern upon my Mind, *what would become of me?* And if at any Time I was drawn out into any Mirth or Laughter, I felt ſomething ſmite my Heart, which brought great Heavineſs over my Spirit; but I knew not what it was, and I little thought it was the Lord, who was ever good and gracious, kind, merciful, and ſlow to Anger, and not willing that People ſhould run into Deſtruction, nor periſh.

I little thought he looked ſo narrowly to my Ways; but ſince the Lord hath been pleaſed to open my Eyes, I can look back and admire his Goodneſs; and

bleſſed

bleſſed be his worthy Name, and the right Arm of his Strength, who hath early been my Guide, and kept me, in great part, from running into the Evil of the World, which greatly attends young People. But bleſſed be the Name of the Lord, he took me by the Hand, and led me when I knew not of it, in the Days of my tender Years; and if I had not hearkened unto the Enemy, my Condition had been well. But as ſoon as he had drawn my Mind into *Pride*, and to take Delight in *fine Clothes*, it ſoon became my Burden; for in a little time after, the Lord, in the Riches of his Love, was pleaſed to fit and furniſh his faithful Servants, and painful Labourers, whoſe Induſtrioufneſs the Lord greatly proſpered, Two Men of worthy Memory, dear *John Audland*, and

John

John Camm, in 1654. But when I heard the Report of them, it ſtruck a Dread over my Heart, hearing of their Plainneſs. I began to think, *how ſhall I demean my ſelf to go to hear them?* In a little Time after, there was a Meeting appointed by them, where my Lot was to be, and (dear) *John Audland* was declaring; but as ſoon as I heard his Voice, it pierced me; and when I came into the Meeting, and heard his Teſtimony, and beheld his ſolid Countenance, Oh! how my Heart was troubled within me, inſomuch that I knew not what would become of me.

After Meeting was over, I ſeparated my ſelf from my Company, and travelled alone two Miles, becauſe no Ear ſhould hear me making my Mone unto the Lord; and out of the Bitterneſs

of

of my Spirit did I ſay, *Lord, wha ſhall I do to be ſaved? I would d any thing for Aſſurance of everlaſt ing Life; and if the Lord wi be pleaſed to accept of me upon an Terms, I matter not what becom of this outward Body; if I coul find out a Cave of the Earth tha I might get into, where I migh mourn out my Days in Sorrow and ſee Man no more.*

I thought I could have bee contented, but it pleaſed the Lor to open the Eyes of my Unde ſtanding, and to lead me by Way that I knew not, and to be gin the firſt Day's Work in m Heart, *which was the Spirit of t Lord to move upon the Waters, an to divide the Light from the Dar neſs*; and when the Separatio was made, then could I ſee m Way in the Light, *which was t Light unto* David's *Feet, and w a La*

a Lanthorn unto his Paths; and it will order every ones Goings aright, if they take Heed unto it.

It would be too tedious to go through every particular State; but my earneſt Cries were unto the Lord, to lead me the right Way, and *to create in me a new Heart, and renew a right Spirit within me. Oh! let me be unto thee O Lord what I am, and not unto Man; I do not take Care for this outward Body, do but redeem my Soul from Death, and out of this horrible Pit, wherein I am held as in Chains of Darkneſs, and ſhall periſh for ever, if thou doſt not, out of thy infinite Mercy, have Compaſſion on me, and bow thy Ears to my Cries, for I can do nothing elſe.* For I can truly ſay, my Heart was filled with Sorrow, my Sighing came before I eat, and Tears was as my ſorrow-

ſorrowful Meat; when I lay down, it was in Sorrow, and watered my Pillow with my Tears, before I could take my Reſt; and when I awaked, it was with the Dread of the Lord over my Heart.

Oh! my Soul can do no leſs than magnifie the living God, who is worthy of Praiſe, Honour and Renown, Thankſgiving and Obedience for evermore. And, *why ſo?* Becauſe he hath condeſcended unto the loweſt Eſtate of his Hand-maid, and bowed his Ear unto my Prayers, and had a Regard unto my Cries, and hath anſwered my Requeſt, and given me my Heart's Deſire, which was to be led the right Way. And *Sion*'s poor Travellers know very well, this is a Beginning or a Step in the Way; for I can truly ſay, that I never coveted Heaven's Glory, nor to be made a Partaker

of

of the Riches, Glory, and everlaſting Well-being for ever, more than I deſired to walk in the Way that leads thereunto. And I did as truly believe, that the Lord would redeem a People out of the World, and its Ways, and Cuſtoms, Language, Marriage, and Burying, and all the World's Hypocriſy; I looked for this Change before I ſaw any Appearance of it; but all my Fear was, *I ſhould not live to ſee it*; the Enemy always following of me with his Temptations, to work me into Unbelief, and to caſt me down into Deſparation. Oh! my Soul cannot but give the Lord God the Glory, the Honour and the Renown, for he is worthy of it for ever, and evermore.

And now my dear Children, this is for you to remember, and keep

keep by you, that ye may always know the Way to Heaven's Glory, and to enjoy true Peace and Satisfaction; it is a ſtrait and narrow Way; whoever thinks it is not, they are miſtaken. Therefore, my dear Children, keep unto the daily Croſs all the Days of your Lives, and to Truth's Language. And more eſpecially keep your Heart with all Diligence, for out of it are the Iſſues of Life; then will you be brought nearer and nearer unto the Lord, and grow into Acquaintance with him; which was that my Soul mourned for in the Days of my tender Years; which I cannot forget, nor I hope ever ſhall, for I find the good Effects of it from Day unto Day, it bows my Spirit, and humbles my Heart, and keeps me in a living Remembrance of what the Lord has done for me; tho'

tho' the Lord has been pleas'd to give me the Waters of a bitter Cup to drink, and to feed me with Bread of Affliction, and ſuffer Temptation upon Temptation to come near me, and the Enemy, the ſubtile Serpent, the old Dragon, who was more ſubtile than all the Beaſts of the Field, following me with his Lies, to perſuade me that the Lord had no Regard to me, if he had, he would not take Delight to afflict me; *for there is none like thee*, ſaid the wicked one, *thou mayſt look abroad, and ſee where thou canſt find one whoſe Sorrow is like unto thine.*

Then would I wander alone in ſome remote Place, where no Eye could ſee me, nor Ear hear me, to make my Mone unto the Lord, who hath ſweetly comforted me, and refreſhed my Spirit many a Time, and hath kept my Head above

above the Waters, bleſſed be the worthy Name of the Lord my God, and the right Arm of his Strength, that hath wrought wonderfully for my Deliverance; and curſed is the old Dragon, who ever envied Man's Proſperity, and to deſtroy the bleſſed Work of the Lord, as much as in him lieth. For after the Lord had done much for me, and in a good Meaſure had redeemed my Soul from Death, and by a high Hand, and ſtretched out Arm, had brought me out of *Egypt*'s Darkneſs, and through the Red-Sea, where my Soul had true Cauſe to Sing Praiſes unto the moſt High God, who lives for ever, and for evermore. Oh! let me never forget ſo great and wonderful Deliverance, but for ever keep in that that will bow my Heart from Day unto Day, and humble my Spirit

Spirit before the Lord, who hath been pleaſed to do more for me than my Tongue is able to declare. And although I can ſay, mine Eyes have ſeen Afflictions, and no Afflictions ſeem joyous, but grievous for the preſent, yet afterwards it brings forth the peaceable Fruits of Righteouſneſs.

And now, my dear Children, my very Aim and End is to make you a little acquainted with the Work of the Lord in my Heart, and alſo with the ſubtile Devices and Contrivances of the Enemy of your immortal Souls; his Way is to ſet Baits according unto Peoples Nature, for therein he is moſt likely to prevail. And becauſe I was of a *ſad Heart*, and very ſubject to be *caſt down*, therefore did he with all his Might endeavour to caſt me down

into *Deſpair*, and *Unbelief*; perſwading of me, *I ſhould never hold out unto the End.* Then did I mourn to the Lord, to preſerve me to the End; for my Affliction was very great, both inward and outward, and many Things he caſt before me, that ſeem'd too hard for me to go through; when my Mind was filled with Sorrow, the Enemy got Ground upon me and filled my Heart with Thoughts and Imaginations, until my Heart grew hard before I was aware of it, and I had loſt that ſweet Enjoyment and heavenly Fellowſhip that I was comforted with in the Night Seaſon, and in the Morning Light. I had great Cauſe to magnifie the worthy Name of the Lord, who was pleaſed to comfort my afflicted Soul; but when the Enemy had gotten a little Ground upon

upon me, he ſet his Baits ſo agreeable unto my Nature, which was apt to be *caſt down.* And when I had any thing ſtruggling in me in Remembrance of my State and Condition I was in a little before, and now for a little time I had loſt it; I had great Cauſe to mourn unto the Lord, who was able to deliver me, as he had done many a time, bleſſed be his holy Name, and the Right Arm of his Strength, that lives for ever. Yet though he was able to do it, yet the Enemy prevail'd upon me a little farther: For when I was in my mournful Eſtate, making my Moan unto the Lord, ſaying in my Heart, *there's no Sorrow like mine:* And why none like thine? Becauſe I had loſt my Beloved, and my Loſs was great; he that had redeemed my Soul from Death,

and had done well for me; Oh! I could do no leſs but mourn for him. And in this Time of Mourning, which was a State very ſuitable unto my Condition, had I been wary of that ſubtile Serpent, who was too hard for me, in perſwading of me I was diſcontented, a Murmurer, and Complainer, and I made the Lord weary with my Crying, and I ſhould be ſhut out of his Kingdom, for 'twas the Murmurers and Complainers that periſhed in the Wilderneſs.

Oh! how ſoon was I caught by his Subtilty; for he infuſed in me, and perſwaded me, it was in vain to ſtrive any longer, for I ſhould never inherit the Kingdom of Heaven. But a Lyar he was, and ever will be; my Soul is at Enmity with him, the Lord in whom I truſt, preſerve me, and

my

my Houſe for ever: As it pleaſed my Heavenly Father (who had a Regard unto me) to make Way for me to eſcape: For in a little Time after it was my Lot to be at a Meeting where a faithful Servant of the Lord was, by Name *William Dewſbery*, whoſe Teſtimony was moſtly unto the Diſtreſſed and Afflicted, toſſed with Tempeſt, and not comforted; which State many were in, in that Day. A 1655. true Meſſenger he was unto many. I was 21 Years of Age when I was in this Condition; but after Meeting was ended, I dreaded to go unto him, for I thought that he was one of a great Diſcerning, and he would be ſenſible of the Hardneſs of my Heart; and if he ſhould judge me, I ſhould not be able to bear it; but yet I could not go away in

Peace, until I had been with him. Who ſeeing me coming ſo heavily on, held up his Hand, and with a raiſed Voice ſaid unto me, *Dear Lamb, judge all Thoughts and believe, for Bleſſed are they that believe and ſee not.* And with a raiſed Voice again ſaid, *They were Bleſſed that ſaw and believed, but more Bleſſed are they that believed and ſaw not.*

Oh! he was one that had good Tidings for me in that Day, and great Power was with his Teſtimony at that very Time; for the Hardneſs was taken away, and my Heart was opened by that ancient Power that opened the Heart of *Lydia*; everlaſting Praiſes be given unto him that ſits upon the Throne for ever, who hath preſerved me out of the Snares and ſubtile Contrivances of the Adverſary.

And

And now, my dear Children, you have been brought up in the Way of Truſt, it is made known unto you; and my Soul cannot but bleſs and praiſe the Lord my God, who hath preſerved me out of the Evil of the World; therefore truſt in his Name, and believe he will keep you unto the End; which he will aſſuredly do, if you depart not from him; which I hope you will not whilſt you have a Day to live; and my Prayers are both Night and Day for you.

I can truly ſay, that when any of our Family have gone out of our Habitation (tho' upon outward Occaſions) my Prayers hath aſcended unto the Lord for their Preſervation; and unto this Day the Lord hath heard, bleſſed be his Name that lives for ever. For you may well remember the ma-

ny Dangers you have been preſerv'd out of, that have been likely to hazard your Lives, but the Lord of his infinite Goodneſs hath hitherto preſerv'd you all, that you may ſerve him. Therefore, dear Children, forget not your Duty unto the Lord, and the Counſel that Jeſus Chriſt gave unto his Diſciples, which was, *to Watch, and Pray*, that you may be preſerved out of all Dangers, both inward and outward, which you may be liable to fall into, if you do not keep unto the Guide of your Youth: But if you keep unto him, he will never depart from you; and *keep in Remembrance your Creator in the Days of your Youth*, then will he keep you in the Hour of Temptation, and he will take Care for you; if you *ſeek firſt the Kingdom of God, and his Righteouſneſs*,

neſs, other Things ſhall be added unto you; He hath ſpoken that cannot Lye, therefore put your Truſt in him for ever. Then will my Heavenly Father do for you, as he hath done for me; in the Days of my tender Years, he took me by the Hand, and led me by a Way I knew not, and made Darkneſs Light before me; and hath preſerved me unto this very Day in Covenant with himſelf; everlaſting Praiſes and Honour be given unto his holy Name for ever, ſaith my Soul.

Now, my dear Children, you may remember ſince you have had an Underſtanding, the many Straits and Difficulties the Lord hath enabled me to go through, for theſe many Years, though but weak, and greatly afflicted with Sickneſs, and very near the Grave many a time, and the Lord re-

newed my Strength again, to bear many a faithful *Teſtimony* for him, and his bleſſed Truth; many various *Straits* and *Hardſhips* hath the Lord my Redeemer brought me through; which when I look back and conſider, I am filled with Admiration, in Conſideration how my Soul hath eſcaped to this very Day. But this Saying of Chriſt Jeſus often comes before me, *That greater is he that is in you, than he that is in the World*; and ſaid to his Diſciples, *be of good Cheer, I have overcome the World.* This hath been a Comfort to me many a Time, and I often remember a Saying of a faithful Servant and Miniſter of Jeſus Chriſt, whoſe Name was *Miles Halhead*; when I was 21 Years of Age, and under great Exerciſe, he ſtedfaſtly looking upon me, ſaid, *Dear Child, if thou*

thou continue in Truth, thou wilt make an Honourable Woman for the Lord; for the Lord God will honour thee with his bleſſed Teſtimony. And ten Years after, in 1665, he came to my Habitation, and ſaid unto me, *My Love and Life is with thee, and that for that bleſſed Work's ſake that is at work in thee; the Lord God keep thee faithful, for he will require hard Things of thee, that thou art not aware of; the Lord give thee Strength to perform it, and keep thee faithful to his bleſſed Teſtimony; my Prayers ſhall be for thee, as often as I remember thee.* And ſoon after that, a great Exerciſe fell upon us; we were expoſed to great Suffering, and the Lord had opened my Mouth in a Teſtimony but a little before; yet have been concerned, for fear my Friends ſhould Suffer for me; not

for

for my ſelf, for I could truly ſay, *My Heart was given up to ſerve the Lord, come what would come.* But this was the leaſt of our Sorrow; Loſs of Goods, Beating and Hurling to and fro, and Dragging out of our Meeting-Houſe, and many other Abuſes, which the Lord made us able to go through, and ſanctified unto us; and my Soul bleſſeth the Lord, for that he accounted us worthy to ſuffer for his Name ſake.

For in the Time of Suffering, a ſelfiſh ſeparating Spirit did begin to break forth amongſt us; which added to our Affliction and Sorrow, more than all our Perſecutors could do; tho' we went in great Hazard of our Lives to our Meetings: The *Informers* were ſo Wicked and Inhumane, and filled with Envy and Madneſs, that they ſwore, *It was no more*

more Sin to kill us, than it was to kill a Louſe ; and that *they would bathe their Swords in our Blood.* But bleſſed be the Lord our God that liveth for ever, we were in no wiſe affrighted at theſe Things, nor concerned at it, for we knew him, in whom we had believed, was able to deliver his choſen ones that put their truſt in him.

And now, my dear Children, ſome of theſe Things you know, your Eyes have ſeen this when you were Young and Tender in the Beginning of your Days; and though but young and tender, yet the Lord kept you from the Fear of Men. And in this Time of great Exerciſe, there fell upon me another greater Exerciſe and Travail of Spirit, which ſeemed ſo ſtrange and ſo wonderful, that I could not believe that ever the Lord would require ſuch a Ser-

vice

vice of me, that was ſo weak and contemptible, ſo unfit and unlikely, my Underſtanding but ſhallow, and my Capacity but mean, and very low and dejected in my own Eyes; and looking ſo much at my Inſufficiency, made me to ſtrive ſo much againſt it; crying oftentimes within my ſelf, *Surely this is Something to enſnare me, for the Lord does not require ſuch Things of me; ſeeing there are ſo many Wiſe and Good Men that are more Honourable, and fitter for ſuch Service than I; Oh Lord, remove it far from me, and require any thing elſe of me, that I can better perform.*

Thus did I reaſon and ſtrive againſt it, till my Sorrow was ſo great, that I knew not whether ever the Lord would accept of me again. Then did I cry unto the Lord again, and again; *Lord, if*

if thou haſt found me worthy, make my Way plain before me, and I will follow thee; for Lord, thou knoweſt that I would not willingly offend thee. But for fear that it ſhould be required of me to go to the Great Men of the Earth, I knowing my ſelf to be of ſuch a weak Capacity, I did not think that the Lord would make choice of ſuch a contemptible Inſtrument as I, to leave my Habitation, and tender Children, that were young and tender, to go to King *Charles*, which was an Hundred Miles from my Habitation, and with ſuch a plain Teſtimony as the Lord did require of me; which made me go bowed down many Months under the Exerciſe of it, and often times ſtrove againſt it; but I could get no Reſt, but in giving up to obey the Lord in all Things that he required of me; and

and though it ſeemed hard and ſtrange unto me, yet the Lord made hard Things eaſy, according to his Promiſe unto me, when I was going from my tender Children, and knew not but that my Life might have been required for my Teſtimony, it was ſo plain; and when I looked upon my Children, my Bowels yerned towards them. The Word that ran through me was, *If thou canſt believe, thou ſhalt ſee all Things accompliſhed, and thou ſhalt return in Peace, and thy Reward ſhall be with thee.* And for ever bleſſed be the Name and Power of the Lord, that ſuſtained me in my Journey, and gave me Strength to do his Will, and afforded me his living Preſence to accompany me, which is the greateſt Comfort that ever can be enjoyed; and this was my Teſtimony to King

Charles

Charles the Second, in the 11th Month, of the Year, 1670.

This is unto thee O King; hear what the Lord hath committed unto my Charge concerning Thee: As thou haſt been the Cauſe of making many Deſolate, ſo will the Lord lay thee Deſolate; and as many as have been the Cauſe of the Perſecuting, and the Shedding of the Blood of my dear Children, in the Day when I call all to an Account, I will plead with them, ſaith the Lord; therefore hear and fear the Lord God of Heaven and Earth, for of his righteous Judgments all ſhall be made Partakers; from the King that ſitteth upon the Throne, to the Beggar upon the Dunghill.

This Teſtimony I delivered into his Hands, with theſe Words in my Mouth, *Hear Oh! King, and fear the Lord God of Heaven and Earth.* And I can truly ſay, that

that the Dread of the Moſt High God was ſo upon me, that it made me tremble, and great Agony was over my Spirit; inſomuch that Paleneſs came in his Face, and with a mournful Voice he ſaid, *I thank you, Good Woman.* My Soul honoureth and magnifieth the Name and Power of the Lord my God, for keeping me faithful to his bleſſed Teſtimony, and giving me Strength to do his Will, and made good his Promiſe, which was, *If I could believe, I ſhould return in Peace, and my Reward ſhould be with me.* So the Lord bleſſed my going forth, and his Preſence was with me in my Journey, and preſerved my Family well, and my coming Home was with Joy and Peace in my Boſom, everlaſting Praiſes, Glory and Honour be given unto him that ſits on the Throne, and

to

to the Lamb for ever, and for evermore.

And now, my dear Children, this is for you to remember the Goodneſs of the Lord to his Children, that faithfully follow and obey him with their whole Hearts, though they may be attended with many Weakneſſes, and are many times crying unto the Lord, *Oh! my Weakneſs, I am not able to go through this great Work, neither indeed am I worthy; there are many Honourable Wiſe Men that thou haſt fitted for thy Service, that are fitter than I am; and there ſeemeth ſo many Mountains in my Way, and ſo many Difficulties appear in my View, that it appeareth too wonderful for me to go through.* And ſo it was indeed, whilſt I gave Way to the Reaſoner, which I have done many a Time, till my Sorrow hath been ſo great, that I have

I have not known which Way to Turn; for it hath dimm'd my Sight, and hurt my Life, and plunged my Soul into Sorrow, whilſt I gave way to the reaſoning Part. But it pleaſed the Lord to appear in a needful Hour, and turned back the Enemy of my Soul's Peace, and ſhewed unto me that he would chooſe the Weak and the Dejected, and them that were nothing in their own Eyes, and that could do nothing, no not ſo much as to utter a Word but what the Lord giveth into their Mouths, I mean in Teſtimony for the living God, that the Scripture of Truth may be fulfilled in this our Day, as fully as it was in Times paſt and gone, that no Fleſh ſhould glory in his Preſence. Then did I freely give up to obey the Requirings of the Lord with Peace and Comfort,

and

and received the bleſſed Reward in my Boſom, as I have already ſaid, but our Exerciſe continued by our Perſecutors. But bleſſed be the Name and Power of the Lord for his infinite Mercies, for according to the Day, ſo was our Strength.

A little Time after, the Officers came and demanded Money for the King for our Meeting together. My Huſband anſwered them, *If I owed the King any, I would ſurely pay him; but ſeeing I owe him no Money, ſurely I will pay him none.* They aſked him leave to Strain his Goods, he ſaid, *If you will take my Goods, I cannot hinder you, but I will not give you leave to take them; neither will I be acceſſary to your taking of them.* Then the Officers ſeeing our Innocency (for we were in our Shop at our lawful Calling, with our

our Hands to our Labour, and our Children with us) the Conſtable leaning his Head down upon his Hand, with a heavy Heart ſaid, *It is againſt my Conſcience to take their Goods from them.* Then I ſaid, John *have a Care of wronging thy Conſcience; for what could the Lord do more for thee than to place his good Spirit in thy Heart, to teach thee what thou ſhouldeſt do, and what thou ſhouldeſt leave undone.* He ſaid, *I know not what to do in this Matter; if paying the Money once would do, I would do it, but it will not end ſo; but it will be thus, whilſt you keep going to Meeting; for the Rulers have made ſuch Laws, that never was the like in any Age.* I ſaid, John, *When thou haſt wronged thy Conſcience, and brought a Burthen upon thy Spirit, it is not the Rulers can remove it from thee. If thou*

ſhouldeſt

ſhouldeſt go to the Rulers, and ſay, I have done that which was againſt my Conſcience to do; they may ſay as the Rulers did to *Judas, What is that to us, ſee thou to that.*

But the Officers that were with him, came and pulled down our Goods; but the Power of the Lord ſmote them, inſomuch that Paleneſs was in their Faces, and their Lips quivered, and their Hands did ſo ſhake, that they could not hold it long. Then they would force a Poor Man to take them, but he refuſed, until they forced him, and laid them upon his Arms and Shoulders; but he looking much like a dead Man, replied, *You force me to do that, which you cannot do your ſelves, neither can I*; for he trembled very much, though we had not ought farther to ſay unto them,

them, after they came in, but could rejoyce that the Lord had found us worthy to ſuffer for his bleſſed Truth and Teſtimony.

A little Time after, they had a Meeting to Prize the Goods they took from us, and other *Friends*; where there met together Seven Men called Juſtices, and the Officers and Sheriffs Bailiff, and many more of their Confederates, a great Room full of them; and I was at Work in our Shop; and ſeeing the Conſtable carrying along ſome of the Goods to be Prized, it immediately came into my Heart to go after them; not knowing one Word that I ſhould have to ſay; which made me a little conſider for what I ſhould go; but it more and more reſted with me to go; and when I came within the Door, I ſate down like one that was a Fool, and

and had not one Word to ſay for a Time; as near as I can count the Time, Half or Three Parts of an Hour. But when I came in, they were greatly diſquieted in their Minds, and hurried in their Buſineſs, that they ſaid many a time, *that they could do nothing whilſt I was with them*; the Juſtices calling one to another to cauſe me to be taken away many Times, ſaying, *We ſhall not do any Buſineſs this Day, but ſpend our Time in vain, if this Woman ſit here.* And they many Times tempted me to ſpeak what I had to ſay, and be gone; but could not prevail with me. Then calling to the Man of the Houſe to take me away, ſolemnly proteſting never to come to his Houſe again, if he would not take me away. But the Man had not Power to touch me, but full of Trouble, ſaid, *Sir, I can-*

not lay Hands on her, for ſhe is my honeſt Neighbour: And turning him towards me, ſaid, *Pray Neighbour* Stirredge, *if you have any thing to ſay, ſpeak, that you may be gone.* Then one of the Juſtices in great Rage and Fury ſolemnly proteſted he would never ſit with them any more, if they did not take me away; often-times wondering at their Folly for letting of me alone. Then he opened the Back Door, and went out, as though he would be gone, but in a little Time came in again, ſaying, *What is ſhe here yet? I wonder at your Folly.* Then the Power of the Lord fell upon me, and filled my Heart with a very dreadful Warning amongſt them; telling them, *That it was in vain for them to be found ſtriving againſt the Lord, and his People; their Work would not proſper; for*

the

the Great God of Heaven and Earth would be too ſtrong for them. Therefore I warned them to repent, and amend their Lives before it be too late; for the Lord will ſmite you in a Day at unawares, and in an Hour not expected by you; therefore remember that the Lord hath afforded you a Day of Warning, before Deſtruction comes upon you. This, and much more ran thro' me at that Time; and the Lord was pleaſed in a very ſhort Time to fulfill that Teſtimony on them. For in a few Weeks, as they were making Merry at a Feaſt, Two of them died on a ſudden after Dinner, and the Reſt very hardly eſcaped, about the Year, 1674.

Now, my dear Children, I write not this, to rejoyce at the Fall of our Enemies, but for you to conſider of the Goodneſs, and

Mercies, and Dealing of the Lord with his People in all Ages; and to keep in remembrance his loving Kindneſs and Forbearance to the very Wicked, that are always provoking him to pour down his Vengeance upon their Heads. Yet ſo great is his Mercies, that he always warneth the Wicked, and gives them Time to Repent, and Space to amend their Lives, that the Lord may be clear in the Day of Account; which Day will ſurely come upon all that draws breath in the Air.

Therefore, my dear Children, remember your latter End, and the Day of Account, and keep a Bridle to your Tongues; for he that knows not a Bridle to his Tongue, *his Religion is vain.* And keep to the daily Croſs, which is the Power of God to Salvation. And if you will be

Heirs

Heirs of the Kingdom of Heaven, and Crown Immortal, you muſt take up the daily Croſs, for *no Croſs no Crown*; the Croſs will keep your Minds in ſubjection to the living God; and being in Subjection, and ſtanding in awe that you Sin not, this will keep you near unto the Lord, in a living Acquaintance with him; then he will take Delight to bleſs you more and more, to inſtruct you, and to counſel you in his Way, which is Pure and Holy, and will not admit of any Unholineſs, nor any Uncleanneſs.

Therefore, my dear Children, keep clear in your Spirits in the Sight of God, and beware of the World, and the People thereof; be not in too much Familiarity with them, nor let in their Spirit to mix with yours; that hath been the Hurt of many who have

been going right on their Way, and have made a good Beginning; yet for want of watchfulneſs, and keeping to the Guide of their Youth, the Light of Chriſt Jeſus, which is the Way to Salvation; and whoever comes in any other Way, is a Thief and a Robber. The Way you know, you have been trained up in it; and the Concern of my Spirit is, that you may keep in it, and be concern'd for your Children, as your Father and I have been for you; and train them up in the Way of Truth, and keep them out of the Beggerly Rudiments of this World, that they may grow up in Plainneſs, and keep to the plain Language, both you and they; which is become a very indifferent Thing amongſt many of the Profeſſors of Truth. But in the Beginning we went through great Exerciſe for that very

very Word as *Thee* or *Thou* to one particular Perſon. And for my Part I had a Concern upon my Spirit, becauſe I ſhifted many a Time from that one Word; I would have ſaid any Word rather than *Thee* or *Thou*, that would have anſwered the Matter that I was concern'd in, but ſtill I was condemned, Guilt following of me; I was not clear in the Sight of God, my Way was hedged up with Thorns, I could go no further, until I had yielded Obedience unto the little Things; then I walked alone (as my manner was, and frequently uſed ſo to do, when Things came as a Weight or Concern upon me). where I might be private from all Concern, except my Soul's Concern; Oh! that deſolate Place where I uſed to retire alone, how many times hath my Soul met with my

Beloved there, that hath ſweetly comforted me, when my Soul hath been ſick of Love; and full of Doubts for fear my Beloved had left me, and forſaken me. But bleſſed be his Name, that liveth for ever, he ſtill appeared in a needful Time, when my Soul was diſtreſſed for him, and then was the Time I truly prized him. And this is the Way of the Lord's dealing with his Children, that he may teach them to be humble, and train them up as Children, that they may learn Obedience in all Things to do his Will. And this is his End in Chaſtizing of his Children, to make them fit for his Service.

But I little thought in that Day, the Lord would have ſpared me ſo many Years, to bear a faithful Teſtimony to his bleſſed Truth and powerful Appearance

in

in the Morning of the bleſſed Day of the breaking forth of his glorious Light and Life unto many Thouſands that ſate in Darkneſs, whoſe State was Miſerable and Diſtreſſed, and many Times paſt Hope of ever ſeeing a good Day, and at their Wits-end; Horror, Dread and Anguiſh, was in the Hearts of many. Oh! theſe were they that could receive and prize the bleſſed Proffers of God's everlaſting Love and Appearance, though it was in the Way of his Judgments. For I can truly ſay, that my Heart and Soul delighted in Judgment; though one Woe was poured out after another; yet bleſſed be the Day in which the everlaſting Truth was firſt founded in my Ears; which was in the Nineteenth Year of my Age. Oh let it never be forgotten by me, is my Soul's Deſire: But

more bleſſed be the Name of the Lord our God, and the right Arm of his Power, that hath been made bare from Day to Day, and from Year to Year, for the carrying on of his bleſſed Work, and the Preſervation of his Children unto this very Day alive in his bleſſed Teſtimony.

But the greateſt Exerciſe that ever I met withal, was concerning this ſeparating Spirit that is gone forth from us, that firſt began to appear in *theſe Parts*, in *John Story*, and *John Wilkinſon*, about the Year 1670, which I find a Concern upon my Spirit to leave a ſhort Relation of my great Travail and Exerciſes in this Work and Service for the Lord, his bleſſed Truth and Teſtimony, that he in the Riches of his Love had made my Heart and Soul a living Partaker of, Praiſes be given

given to his Holy Name for ever.

In the Year 1670, which was a Time of great Suffering amongſt Friends, and from that Time forward (as it is well known amongſt Friends, and others) we went to out Meetings in the Peril of our Lives, and our Goods they took for a Prey. And in this Time of great Exerciſe did this Dividing Spirit begin to appear, and in a very crafty Manner did enſnare the Hearts of divers of the Simple. And indeed there was too too many that the Lord had reached unto in the Days of the breaking forth of his wonderful Power, whom the Lord had enriched both inward and outward, that had forgotten the Days of their Diſtreſs, and where the Lord firſt found them out, and had cauſed the Offence

of

of the Croſs to ceaſe, and had gotten into Eaſe and Liberty. Oh! how did ſuch fall in with them, to the Grief of the Souls of the Faithful.

And in that Day of great Trouble, greater was our Sorrow for the Loſt of our Brethren, than for all our Perſecutions, or Loſs of Goods, or all other Abuſes of what kind ſoever; for indeed, great was our Sorrow on every Hand, and my Soul was moſtly concerned for the Lord, and his bleſſed Truth and Teſtimony. Oh! how did my Heart pant after the Lord, and my Soul travelled Night and Day before him, for Strength to ſtand a faithful Witneſs for the living God, whom I had made a Covenant with in the Days of my bittter Bewailings, when my Soul lay in Diſtreſs and Horror; where the Lord firſt met

with

with me, when I was bewailing my ſelf in bitter Lamentation, ſaying in my Heart, *Oh that I could find out a Cave in the Earth, wherein I might go and mourn out my Days in Sorrow, and ſee Man no more; or that the Lord would be pleaſed to accept of me upon any Terms; or if my Life would be accepted of for a Ranſom for my Soul, I would be very willing to part with it.* The Cry many a time ran through my Heart, *O Lord what ſhall I do to be ſaved?*

Oh! the Appearance of the Lord in that State was very precious to me, I very gladly entred into Covenant with him, to ſerve him for ever, if he would redeem my Soul from Death, and from under the Power of him that was too ſtrong for me. And ſeeing the Lord in his infinite Mercy was ſo good and gracious unto me,

me, as to give me my Heart's Deſire, how could I forget it? No, *rather let my Right Hand forget her Cunning, and my Tongue cleave to the Roof of my Mouth, before I ſhould forget to pay my Vows and Promiſes to the Lord, in the Days of my Diſtreſs.*

And now to come to the Matter concerning this Libertine Spirit.—In the aforeſaid Year 1670, when they began their Work, the Prieſt's Son of our Town was one of the *Informers*, and his Curate was another. The Prieſt's Son bought him a New Sword, and Swore *he would bathe it in our Blood*; and ſaid, *it was no more Sin to kill a* Quaker, *than it was to kill a Louſe.* Thus they began their dreadful Work, which is too tedious to run through the Particulars: But they firſt Nail'd up our Meeting-Houſe Doors,

and

and ſet a Guard before it; and it being on a Day that the Petty-Seſſions was kept in that Town of *Kainſham*, four Miles from *Briſtol*, there being ſeveral Juſtices there, they ſent the Bailiff and other Officers, attended with a great Company of Rabble, who came in great Rage with Clubs, and other Weapons; but the Lord was good and gracious unto us, and gave us Strength according to the Day, and opened my Mouth in a Teſtimony, for the Encouragement of Friends, and in Praiſe to God, for counting us worthy to ſuffer for his Name and Truth's Sake. And after me, another Woman, to the encouraging of Friends; and the Power of the Lord was ſo livingly felt amongſt us, that our Enemies fell, that they could hardly ſpeak to aſk our Names. But at length

we

we were Fined 20*l.* a-piece. But when Meeting ended, we came away rejoycing. And indeed there was great Cauſe for it; for the Power of God was over all, to our great Comfort.

But for all this, the Clouds gathered Blackneſs, and Storms raiſed higher and higher, and diſmal Days appeared; and many ſet their Wits at work, and conſulted together how to meet in private, and out of the Enemies Sight. And it was but a little Time that our Meeting held together; for one that had been a *great Preacher* of our Meeting, was ſoon weary with ſtanding in the Street, at our Meeting-Houſe Door; and was greatly offended with us, for not leaving our Meeting-Houſe, and come and meet with him in private in his Dwelling-Houſe. And there was a little

little Remnant that could not conform to the Will of Man, but feared the Lord, and dreaded to deny him before Men.

Then *R. W.* who was *John Story*'s great Aſſociate, whilſt the ſaid *J. S.* abode in our Parts, ſends a Meſſenger to tell us, *that if we would come and meet with him, and ſome others in private, where* (ſay they) *we may ſit together in Quietneſs and Stillneſs, and wait upon the Lord, and enjoy the Benefit of our Meeting; which will be better than ſtanding here in the Street, to be hurried and thronged together, and hardly any time of Stillneſs to wait upon God.* A very plauſible Bait the Enemy had caſt in their View, and indeed too many were taken in the Snare. But when I heard this Meſſage deliver'd from the *wiſe Preacher* afore-nam'd, Oh! the Concern

Concern that fell upon me, in Conſideration of them that had been *Preachers* amongſt us many Years, that ſhould have been a Strength to the Weak, and Encouragers of the People; and Legs to the Lame, and Eyes to the Blind; that ſuch Men ſhould have no more Courage, nor Zeal, nor Love to the Lord and his bleſſed Truth. Oh! it became my great Grief, and I ſorrowed Night and Day; *Lord ſtrengthen thy weak Ones, and make the little Ones as ſtrong as* David; *give us Courage and Boldneſs to ſtand as faithful Witneſſes for thy bleſſed Truth.* And bleſſed for ever be the Lord our God, he anſwered my Requeſt, and according to the Day, was our Strength renewed; bleſſed be that Hand that never failed us, nor any that put their Truſt in him.

So

So they parted from us, and left us as it were in the open Field to encounter with our Enemies; who the more Triumphed, and made a By-Word of them and us; and cried out, *here be the Fools; the Wiſe Men are gone. Aye*, ſaid they, *they have more Wit than to meet ſo near the Juſtice's Houſe to aggravate him, and ruin themſelves; they be Wiſe Men to ſave themſelves, and that they have; but theſe are the Fools, they will ruin themſelves do what we can; a poor Company of ignorant Fools, that know not their Right Hand from their Left; do you think to ſtand againſt all the Powers of the Earth? A Company of ſilly Fools.*

Thus they pleaſed themſelves with ſuch Diſcourſes, thus to loſe ground, which was a grievous Exerciſe to us, to hear any of our Brethren,

Brethren, which ſhould have been as Valiants in *Iſrael*, and have gone before the little Ones, like valiant Champions to have born the Brunt of the Battle; that our Enemies might have ſeen their Courage and Valour for the Lord of Hoſts; that the Lord through his Inſtruments might have been glorified, and his bleſſed Name and Truth honoured and exalted over all; who alone is worthy of all Honour and Praiſe for evermore.

But if any ſhould ſay, *Was this a Diſcouragement to you little Ones?* No, our Fear and Zeal towards God was increaſed; and I can ſay to the Praiſe and Honour of his everlaſting Name, my Cries and Supplications did aſcend Night and Day unto the Lord, for Strength to ſtand in my Lot and Teſtimony, and that I might be

be made able to hold out to the End. And for ever bleſſed be the Lord, he ſtrengthned my Weakneſs, and made the Weak as ſtrong as *David*, and afforded his living Preſence amongſt us, to our great Comfort. But ſtill my Exerciſe increaſed, which drove me to a narrow Search, and a deep and pondrous Conſideration, what ſhould be the Cauſe of my great Exerciſe; crying to the Lord, *Lord what wilt thou have me to do? Wilt thou be pleaſed to make known thy Will concerning me? Is there any thing lodgeth in my Heart that offendeth thee? Oh purge it out I beſeech thee, ſearch my Heart, and try my Reins, for I love to be ſearcht and tried. Lord, wilt thou be better pleaſed with us, to go and meet with our Friends that are gone from us? Is there Service there that we know not of? Or am I too forward,*

ward, or over zealous for thy Truth? To this Enquiry, the Anſwer ſo ſuited my enquiring Heart: *Keep your Meeting Time, and Place; be valiant for my Truth upon Earth, and I will crown you with Honour.* Oh! bleſſed be his eternal Name, no greater Honour does my Soul deſire, than to be preſerved in his Fear.

And another Time in great Exerciſe it often ſounded in my Heart, *I will gather from far, from the Eaſt, Weſt, North and South, and they ſhall come and ſit down in the Kingdom, with* Abraham, Iſaac *and* Jacob, *and the Children of the Kingdom ſhall be caſt out.* Oh the Concern that fell upon me, and the Cry to the Lord, *Save the Children of the Kingdom; Oh gather from far, and bring near them that are afar off, but ſave the Children of the Kingdom.* This thing

thing was my daily and hourly Exerciſe; many times ſaying within my ſelf, *Oh Lord, ſave the Children of the Kingdom, or take me to thy ſelf, whilſt thy Mercy is continued unto me; let me not live to be caſt out of thy Kingdom.*

Thus the Lord gently led me in theſe Things, tending towards this Service and Teſtimony that he was pleaſed to lay upon me to bear; which was the very greateſt that ever I met withal. For ſtill my Exerciſe increaſed, my inward Pains grew ſtronger and ſtronger, my Heart was troubled within me, my Eyes were as a Fountain of Tears, and I cried out, *Woe is me that ever I was born. Oh! what is the matter that all my Bowels ſeem to be diſplaced.* Then the Word ran through my Heart, *My Indignation is kindled, and my Anger is waxen*

waxen hot againſt this People, and my Controverſie ſhall be with them; and the Time is coming, that they will bring more Diſhonour to my Name and Truth, than is brought by open Prophaneneſs; and thou ſhalt be an Inſtrument to proclaim it in their Ears. Which made me to tremble before the Lord, crying, *Oh Lord, why wilt thou require ſuch hard Things of me? Lord look upon my Afflictions, and lay no more upon me than I am able to bear. They will not hear me that am a contemptible Inſtrument. And ſeeing they deſpiſe the Service of Women ſo much, O Lord make Uſe of them that are more worthy.* And I often-times cried to the Lord to remove it from me, ſtill crying out of my Unworthineſs, *Oh! how unfit am I for ſuch Service.* The Anſwer I receiv'd was, *They ſhall be made Worthy, that dwell*

low

low in my Fear.—So we continued under our great Suffering, a poor little Remnant, as one may term it, was in the open Field, to encounter with our Enemies. But for ever magnified be the Name and Power of our God, his Preſence was our Life and Strength, and according to the Day, was Strength given. Whereof we had great Cauſe to ſay, *Good is the Lord, and his Mercies endure for ever.* And we had Cauſe to praiſe his Name, for that he had made us worthy to ſuffer for his Name and Truth's Sake; and keeping of us faithful to ſtand for our God, and confeſs him before Men. For I can ſay to his Praiſe, I was more encouraged in all Times of Perſecution, wherein I might bear my Teſtimony for the Lord, that had redeemed my Soul from Death, and raiſed me out of the

Pit of Miſery, that I rejoyced to do the Will of the Lord; for it was more to me, than all that ever my Eyes beheld, and to ſtand a faithful Witneſs for him.

I was conſtrain'd in the Fear and Dread of the Lord, to warn them of the dreadful Day of the Lord, and to call them to Repentance for their Unfaithfulneſs. Thus we went on in our continual Exerciſe, and in the Strength of the Lord, and by the Aſſiſtance of his holy Power, were born up in it.

But now to come to what is moſt before me; that all may underſtand how the Enemy works in a Myſtery, and under a fair Pretence to betray the precious Life, and from the Simplicity of the Goſpel, which is Fooliſhneſs to the Wiſdom of the World.

In

In this troubleſome Time, it came in my Heart to viſit Friends in *Wiltſhire*, where I heard much of *J. S.* his Going on. He had much reflected upon ſeveral Women for bearing their Teſtimony againſt that Spirit; and I met with two good Women that had been upon the Service of Truth, and had a good Teſtimony. He grieved them, bidding them go home about their Buſineſs, and waſh their Diſhes, and not go about to preach. And ſaid, that *Paul* did abſolutely forbid Women to preach; and ſent them crying home. And furthermore, he counſelled Friends to uſe Chriſtian Prudence, and remember what is ſaid in Scripture, *If you are perſecuted in one City, flee to another.* So he would have them to alter the Day and Time of their uſual Meeting. And there

was a little Meeting in a Dwelling Houſe, and he importuned them to remove it, or alter the Time; and the Woman Friend of the Houſe was ſoon gained, not being ſo zealous for the Truth as ſhe ſhould have been. Her Huſband being more faithful, would not be caught in that Snare. She fell at Difference with him, and ſaid; *Doſt thou think God doth not reveal his Secrets to ſuch as* J. S. *more than we? Yes ſurely, and if the Lord is pleaſed to ſave us, and what we have, and make him an Inſtrument, why ſhall not we receive his Counſel?* A very ſubtile Bait to catch the poor ignorant People in. Oh this was a great Grief to the ſincere hearted, it cauſed many to know Days and Nights of Sorrow. But ſtill this Teſtimony always lived in my Heart,

Heart, that God's Anger was kindled againſt that Spirit that had turned their Backs on Truth's Teſtimony; and was not only fallen into that Snare themſelves, but endeavoured to enſnare many more. The Concern of it began to come over me, inſomuch that I dreaded to go to a Meeting, for fear that Teſtimony would be required of me; but the Time was not yet come.

But there came a faithful Servant of the Lord to our Meeting, whoſe Name was *Miles Halhead*, who was wonderfully endowed with the Power of the Lord, and great Diſcerning; he came to ſee me, and ſaid, *My Love runs unto thee, and that for the Work's ſake that is in thee; for God will require hard Things of thee; thou little thinkeſt what is at work in thy Heart; the Lord*

God of my Life keep thee faithful, my Prayers ſhall be for thee, as often as I have thee in Remembrance; thou art as my own Life, and ſealed in my Boſom, I cannot forget thee, ſo dear Child fare thee well. The Lord my God hath ſent me forth once more, and when I return home, he will cut the Thread of my Life in two. And ſo it was. But Oh the Goodneſs of the Lord, with that Salutation, overflowed my whole Heart, and melted my Bowels into Tenderneſs, and my Eyes as a Fountain of Tears; ſaying within my ſelf, *What am I but a poor helpleſs Creature, and am not worthy of the leaſt of theſe great Favours and Mercies that the dear Servant of the Lord is ſpeaking of: And ſurely if the Lord be with me, why is it thus with me?*

I am under great Exerciſes daily, and Straits many: Sometimes it ſeemed to me, as if the Lord had withdrawn himſelf from me, which cauſed great Sorrow of Heart. But in a little time after, our Lots being caſt at *Briſtol*, where *John Story* was moſt of his Time, the Heigth of Perſecution being a little over, then he could Preach one Hour after another, whilſt one Word would hang to another, to the Hindrance of ſeveral travelling Souls that have been in Travail, and pained at the very Heart for a little Time to eaſe their Spirits, and diſcharge their Duty, that all might have been comforted together. But in the Room of that, a Cloud of Darkneſs hath come over, which hath made many to groan under it. But Oh! the dreadful Agony

which I have been in to come forth with that Teſtimony that had lived with me, that I had been ſo long confirmed in. Many Nights and Days, and Weeks and Months have I gone on in Sorrow and Pain, and have eaten no pleaſant Bread. And many a time have I lain down in Sorrow, and watered my Pillow with my Tears, crying out, *O Lord what will become of me, and what ſhall I do?* And the Lord ſaid, *A Teſtimony I do require of thee.* Then I ſaid, *O Lord, if thou wilt open my Heart to declare of thy Goodneſs, and what thou haſt done for thy People, and to tell of thy noble Acts, and thy manifold Mercies, how ready ſhould I be to do it; but theſe are hard Things, who can bear them?*

Thus I did reaſon with the Lord, till my Burden became

too

too heavy for me to bear. And when I have gone forth in my lawful Concerns, and have ſeen any of them, Pains did take hold of me, and Diſtreſs of Mind, and Anguiſh of Spirit did ſeize upon me; inſomuch that I ſought out private Places to mourn in; ſaying, *What ſhall I do? Send me to a Nation of a ſtrange Language, whoſe Face I never knew, and make uſe of a better Inſtrument for this great Work; they will not hear me, who am a contemptible Inſtrument, neither do I know whether any of them will receive my Teſtimony.*

For there was not one that knew for what I went through ſuch great Exerciſes; for many Friends have ſaid, *That I had ſomething that lay weightily upon me*; inſomuch that I could hardly go on my Feet; and they wondered that I did not give up

unto it, and ſaid, *That I hurt my ſelf, and the Meeting too.*

Oh I cannot but greatly admire the infinite Mercies and loving Kindneſs of the Lord, and his long Forbearance with me, in that he did not cut me off in my Diſobedience to him, when I knew what he required of me, as well as I knew my Right Hand from my Left, and would not obey him. But ſtill I reaſoned, and cried out, *What ſhall I do?* And I thought that if any one had born a Teſtimony in publick before me, I could the better have born it; but I to be one of the firſt, ſuch a contemptible one as I, I thought I could not do it. But what Mercy did not do, Judgment did; for the Lord was pleaſed to lay his Hand heavy upon me, and with his correcting Rod chaſtized me; and I did feel more

of

of the Diſpleaſure of the Lord for my Backwardneſs to his Requirings, than ever I did for my former Tranſgreſſion. For I may ſay, as true as ever *Jonah* was plunged into the Deep, and his Head wraped about with Weeds, ſo was my Soul plunged into a Gulph of Miſery; inſomuch that all Hope of ever finding Favour with God again, was hid from me, and I left in Sorrow to lament, as one without Hope.

Oh! how did my Heart lament, and my Soul languiſh Night and Day; and I ſaid, *Oh that the Lord would be pleaſed to ſhew Mercy once more, and to raiſe up my Life again, and redeem my Soul out of this horrible Pit wherein I am held as with Chains, and bring me to my former State again; and require what thou pleaſeſt, and I will obey thy Voice, though I ſhould*

ſhould be hated of all Men upon the Face of the Earth.

And before I could take any Reſt, I made a deep Engagement unto the Lord, to do whatſoever he required of me, if he would give me Strength, and be with me. So when Firſt Day Morning came, I had a great Concern upon me; and when I ſate down to wait upon the Lord, the Power of the Lord ſeized on me, which made me to tremble; inſomuch that my Bones were ſhaken, and my Teeth chattered, and I was in a great Agony; and ſtanding up, with a dreadful Teſtimony, and proclaiming God's Controverſie with the Exalted and High amongſt the Profeſſors of Truth, and ſuch as had departed from the Croſs of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, with ſuch God's Anger was waxen hot, and his Indigna-

tion

tion burned, and I warned them to repent while they had a Day, and more to that effect, but as ſhort as I could. Then a Friend ſtood up with a great Concern upon him, ſaying, *A Living Teſtimony is the God of Heaven and Earth raiſing up amongſt the Poor and contemptible Ones, that ſhall ſtand over your Heads for evermore.* So he went on in great Power and Authority, and the Power of the Lord was greatly manifeſted amongſt us that Day. Oh Glory be to his everlaſting Name for evermore, ſaith my Soul, for his bleſſed Appearance to us that Day, and all other of his Mercies at all Times, who returned me an hundred fold into my Boſom, after all my unworthy conſulting againſt the Motions of the Spirit of ſo merciful and compaſſionate a Father, who after he had corrected me,

me, receiv'd me into favour again; Oh! Glory to him for evermore. For when I had cleared myConſcience; Oh the Peace and Comfort, and Conſolation that I received from the Lord, was more to me than all the World, or the Friendſhip of it.

So ſome time after, *John Story* and Three of his Party came to my Houſe to Rebuke me, and was very High, and ſpoke great ſwelling Words, thinking thereby to diſcourage me. *John Story* ask'd me, *What I had to lay to his Charge, and what I had againſt him?* I told him, *What I had againſt him, I never received from Man, nor by any Information from any one; but what I have againſt thee, is from the Evidence of God in my own Conſcience. The Evidence of God in thy Conſcience* (ſaid he in a deriding Manner) *that is not*

ſufficient

ſufficient for thee. I ſaid it was ſufficient for me; *by what elſe ſhould I try Spirits with, but by the Evidence of God in my own Conſcience.* So he ſaid again, *that was not ſufficient for me.* My Huſband ſaid, *John, to what wilt thou bring us now? Haſt not thou and all other Friends directed us to God's Witneſs in our own Conſcience, and now thou ſay'ſt* it is not ſufficient. And he ſaid again, *it is not ſufficient, unleſs thou couldeſt bring Witneſs that I had done ſome Evil Action, and what could I accuſe him of; or elſe what ſignifies it to have ought againſt him.*

I could have laid enough to his Charge, of his manner of going on in time of Perſecution; but being willing to be ſhort with him, I ſaid, *I have this to ſay to thee, that thy Ways and manner in publick Meetings, is much differing from*

from the Apoſtle, who ſaid, if any thing be revealed to him that ſitteth by, the firſt is to be ſilent. *And thou wilt take up the whole time of the Meeting, although there hath been many that have been concerned before thy Face, and that greatly; ſo what thou doeſt, is not ignorantly, but wilfully.* He anſwered me very angrily, and ſaid, *If I do do ſo, what canſt thou make of that?* I did ſay, *thou art out of the Order of the Goſpel; for it is ſaid,* the Church may Exerciſe one by one; *and thou doeſt not as thou wouldeſt be done by.* And further I told him, *that this was not his Place to abide here a Preaching, and burthening the Souls of the Innocent; but thy Place is to return Home into the North, ana be reconciled to thy Brethren, before thou go to offer thy Gift.* So many great ſwelling Words proceeded

proceeded from him, and his Three Friends who were with him, and ſo went away ſorely diſpleaſed.

And their Rage increaſed towards me, and many Faithful Friends. (Many were concerned that had ſitten under their dead Miniſtry) but moſtly againſt me, for diſcharging my Duty, in obedience to what the Lord required of me, and committed to my Charge, concerning that Spirit which did for ſome time endeavour to Lord over God's Heritage; which made many ſenſible ones go bowed down many a Time; my Soul is a living Witneſs, with many more, of what I have here declared; which is but little of their Perſecution towards me, in conſideration of what follows after. For the Lord was pleaſed to continue my Exerciſe in that City, where

where *John Story* Abode much of his Time. And ſeveral more of that Spirit oftentimes frequented thither in that Time of Exerciſe with that Spirit. And the Lord was pleaſed to make me ſo ſenſible of them, that in the Night Seaſon I had many a ſore and hard Travail upon my Spirit, when I knew not of any of them by any Information from any one. Then did I make my mone unto the Lord, crying in Secret; *Oh! what ſhall I do to go through ſuch hard things? Oh that I may be excuſed this Day, or that thou wilt be pleaſed to keep me in Silence this Day; then ſhould I be very willing to go to Meeting to wait upon thee, and to ſit under the ſhadow of thy Wing with great Delight, where thy Fruit will be pleaſant to my Taſte.* Then

it would come up before me, the Covenant that I made with the Lord in the Days of my Diſtreſs, when all the World, and the Friendſhip of it, would not yield me one Dram of Comfort to my poor diſtreſſed Soul. Then did I promiſe the Lord in that Day, which was Twenty Years before that, that if he would redeem my Soul from Death, and give me Aſſurance of Life, I would ſerve him all my Days, if he would give me Strength, and be with me; for I mattered not what I went through for his Name's Sake. And it would often come up before me, that they that followed the Lord, and loved him moſt, did whatſoever he commanded them. Oh! I cannot but admire the long Forbearance and loving Kindneſs of the Lord, that he had not cut me off in my gainſaying,

ſaying, and Unfaithfulneſs; for I never wanted the Aſſiſtance of his Holy Spirit, in giving up to his Requirings, bleſſed be the Holy Name of our Lord God, and the Right Arm of his Strength for evermore, who alone hath been our Keeper and Preſerver to this very Day, Glory be to his great Name for evermore.

Now I ſhall give a little Account of one Meeting in *Briſtol*, which was one of the greateſt Exerciſes that ever I met with, or ever went through ſince I had a Remembrance. When I was going to the Meeting, I had a great Exerciſe upon my Spirit, and knew not for what; but after ſome time of waiting upon the Lord, I ſaw my Service, for *J. Story* was there, who came into *Briſtol* the Night before; and ſeveral Friends had warned him *not to*

come

come and offer his Gift, till he was reconciled unto his Brethren ; for if he did, they did believe that the Lord would concern one or another to bear Teſtimony openly againſt him. But I knew not of it till afterward, for if I had, I believe my Service would not have been ſo hard and ſtrange unto me. But whilſt he was Declaring, a great Cloud came over the Meeting, and I was greatly exerciſed in my Spirit ; inſomuch that the Lord conſtrained me to cry, *Woe to that Spirit that dimned the Glory of the Lord, and woe to that Pot that the Scum remains in it, for in it is the Broath of abominable Things, ſuch as the Lord's Soul loatheth, and the Soul of his People alſo.* Oh how it ran thro' me again and again, and I was preſſed in my Spirit to declare it, whilſt he was ſpeaking; But I

was

was ſenſible what a Diſturbance it would be in the Meeting; I would fain have forborn till he had done, but I durſt not; for I was afraid to ſpeak, and afraid to keep ſilent. For if I had been ſilent, I knew that I ſhould have withſtood the Spirit of the Lord in my own Conſcience. But I ſtrove againſt it, by reaſoning, and ſaying, *Oh that the Lord would be pleaſed to excuſe me this Day, and that I might not looſe his Favour, then I ſhould have accounted my ſelf happy.* But all this reaſoning would not do that Serviece that God had for me to do that Day. But when I found no Way to paſs it by, I ſtood up to clear my Conſcience, and diſcharge my Duty in the Sight of God. And when I conſider'd the low Eſtate and weak Condition that I had been in that Day; Oh the Lord's

Strength

Strength ſuſtained me, for according to the Day was Strength given me, Glory to his everlaſting Name for evermore, ſaith my Soul, for his bleſſed Reward was returned into my Boſom, and he renewed my Strength, and raiſed up my Life in Dominion over all their Oppoſition I then met with.

And thus, Reader, I have given this ſhort Account of the going forth and Work of that Spirit; ſince which, I have ſeen a Withering and Decay come upon it, near Twenty Years having ſince paſs'd over my Head.

Oh the many unchriſtian-like Treatments that have been brought forth by that Spirit; and how have ſome of them Writ and Printed againſt Truth and its good Order, and how have they turned their Backs in the

the Day of Battle, and have left their Brethren in the Hands of their Enemies. Oh how grievous have their Actions been ſince the Year 1670. Now let all conſider, whether that Teſtimony that God raiſed in my Heart in that Time of my great Diſtreſs, and great Bowings down, and bitter Bewailings, when the Lord anſwered me for what my great Exerciſe came upon me, was not true; for I can truly ſay, I went under the Exerciſe of their Backſliding many a time. And the Lord was pleaſed to exerciſe me, and to cauſe me to go through a Vail of Tears, and a Land of Drougth, in order to humble me, and that I might bow to his Will, and obey him in all Things; *for Obedience is better than Sacrifice, and to hearken to the Voice of the Lord, is better than the Fat of Rams.* And there

is no hearing of his gracious Voice, but by humbling under his mighty Power, and ſubjecting the Mind unto his Will; then doth he make known his Mind and Will, and then bleſſed are they that hear his Word, and obey it; and bleſſed are they that know his Will, and do it; Oh bleſſed be his Eternal Name for ever, and for evermore, ſaith my Soul, for all his Mercies, and Favours, and Bleſſings, and good Gifts, and Tokens of his gracious Love that he hath beſtowed upon me, ever ſince I have had a Remembrance. Firſt, in keeping me out of the Evil of the World in my young and tender Years, and preſerved me from falling into many, and various, and great Temptations, of which I had a great Share in the Days of my tender Years; and then for taking me by the Hand,

and leading me in his Way, and alſo opened my Spiritual Eye, that I might ſee the Way that led towards his glorious Kingdom; and for his preſerving of me to this very Day alive in his bleſſed and glorious Teſtimony; and all theſe his manifold Mercies, which are all in my View at this Time. And in the remembrance of them my Heart is truly bowed, and with hearty Thankſgiving do return unto my heavenly Father all Glory, and Honour, and Praiſe, and everlaſting Renown be given unto my God, and our dear Lord and Saviour Chriſt Jeſus, who is ſitting upon his Throne, judging in Righteouſneſs, and ſwaying his Scepter in Holineſs; who is worthy for ever to be Feared, Honoured, and Obeyed, ſaith my Soul, at this Time, and for evermore, *Amen.*

And

And now my dear Children, it further lives in my Heart, to leave ſome of the Teſtimonies that the Lord was pleaſed to lay upon me in that Time of great Suffering in *Briſtol*, and near unto it.

In the Year, 1680, I was greatly concerned to go to the Mayor of *Briſtol* with this Teſtimony, on their Seſſions Day in the Morning, waiting at his Door for his riſing from his Bed; I met with him going through one of his Rooms, before he was fully Ready, and ſaid unto him, *The God of Heaven and Earth hath conſtrained me this Night and Morning to come unto thee with this Teſtimony; therefore don't lay it by thee, as a Thing not worth thy minding, but read it, and well weigh and conſider what is written therein; for could I have been*

clear in the Sight of God in not coming, I had not been here this Day.

Which *Teſtimony* was as followeth.

'THIS is to the Mayor, Aldermen, and Officers of all Sorts, and all that have a Hand in Perſecuting of the Righteous Saints and Servants of the moſt High God, called *Quakers*, who are near and dear unto the Lord, as the Apple of his Eye; and the Lord hath ſaid in the Scriptures of Truth, *Touch not mine Anointed, and do my Prophets no harm.* Now conſider you People of all Sorts, who have the Scriptures of Truth ſo frequently amongſt you; Oh! do you make ſuch ill uſe of them, as not to take Notice what is written therein; ſurely they were given forth for a better

'Purpoſe;

‘ Purpoſe ; for the Lord our God,
‘ who is full of Compaſſion, and
‘ Bowels of Love towards the
‘ Work of his own Hands, hath
‘ in the Riches of his Love provi-
‘ ded a Way wherein People
‘ might eſcape his Wrath and
‘ fierce Vengeance ; I ſay, the
‘ Lord hath placed a Meaſure of
‘ his good Spirit in your Hearts,
‘ that never conſented to Sin ; the
‘ which if you would give up to
‘ be guided by it, it would make
‘ you happy for ever ; it would
‘ teach you to do unto all Men, as
‘ you would all Men ſhould do
‘ unto you ; this is a good Leſſon
‘ for you to Learn, this would
‘ make you Honourable in the
‘ Sight of the Nations, and beau-
‘ tifie you in the Sight of the Peo-
‘ ple ; then no rending, tearing,
‘ nor devouring, neither making
‘ havock, nor ſpoiling of our

‘ Goods, no Impriſoning of the
‘ Servants of the moſt High God,
‘ for the Anſwer of a good Con-
‘ ſcience; no beating and throw-
‘ ing of the Ancient and Feeble,
‘ becauſe they cannot ſo haſtily
‘ go out of the Way, as your ha-
‘ ſty Wills would have them; Oh!
‘ the God of Heaven will plead
‘ for theſe Things; and a Day of
‘ Reckoning will the Great Ter-
‘ rible and Mighty *Jehovah*, who
‘ is the God of the whole Earth,
‘ call for, and dreadful and ter-
‘ rible will he be in his Pleading.
‘ Oh! who will be able to ſtand
‘ before him, who is like a devou-
‘ ring Fire, and all the Wicked,
‘ and all that forget God, ſhall be
‘ as Stubble before him, ſaith the
‘ Scriptures of Truth.

‘ Now, O ye Rulers and Peo-
‘ ple of all Sorts, read the Scrip-
‘ tures, and ſee what became of

‘ the

'the Perſecutors in Days paſt, for
'they were written and left upon
'Record for the Comfort of them
'that live the Life of them, and
'for warning of the Wicked and
'Ungodly. Now conſider *Dives*
'in the Days of his Health, how
'he fared ſumptuouſly every Day,
'and conſidered not poor *Laza-*
'*rus*, that begged at his Gate.
'Oh! how hard-hearted was he;
'but what became of him? And
'what a dreadful Place of Tor-
'ment is prepared for the Wick-
'ed and for the Ungodly, where-
'in they are made to cry out
'when it is too late, for one
'Drop of Water to cool their
'Tongues, and it ſhall not be
'granted them. Therefore for
'the Lord's ſake, and for your
'own Soul's ſake, Repent, leſt
'you periſh to all Eternity, if
'you repent not. Wherefore

'the Call of the Lord is once
'more ſounded in thee, O City
'of *Briſtol*, and to the Inhabi-
'tants thereof; Oh! Repent, Re-
'pent before it be too late, and
'break off thy Sins by true Re-
'pentance, and thy Tranſgreſ-
'ſion by ſhewing Mercy; plead
'the Cauſe of the Innocent, and
'let the Oppreſſed go free; and
'be not worſe than them of old,
'who cryed, help O Men of *Iſra-*
'*el*, &c. But now there is a Com-
'pany of rude Boys, and Rab-
'ble of the baſeſt Sort, with the
'Officers, thronging in amongſt
'us, preſſing of us together with-
'out Mercy, and the Officers
'themſelves taking of us by the
'Arms, and throwing us along,
'until we can hardly recover our
'ſelves; and pulling off the Mens
'Hats, and throwing them from
'them in great Fury, and hale to

'Priſon

'Priſon many in a Day. Oh be
'ye aſhamed, ye Rulers, and all
'that have a Hand in this Work;
'Oh dread and tremble before the
'Great and Terrible God that
'made you, and gave you Breath,
'and Being; for he is able to
'daſh you in Pieces like a Pot-
'ter's Veſſel, and to take away
'your Breath, and to lay you as
'dead Men before him. There-
'fore conſider it before it be too
'late, and before the Days of
'your Calamity come upon you,
'and the Arrows of the Almighty
'ſtick faſt in your Livers, and
'there will be none to help you,
'nor to deliver out of his Hands;
'for the Lord will aſſuredly viſit
'this Nation, and that for the
'Treachery, and curſed Oaths,
'Pride and Oppreſſion of many
'therein, whoſe Sins have reach-
'ed unto Heaven. And it is the

' Determination of the great God
' of Heaven and Earth to ſend
' his deſtroying Angel amongſt
' them, and ſhall thin them;
' great will be your Sorrow, Pain,
' and Perplexity, Terror and A-
' mazement, Horror and Vexa-
' tion of Spirit; alas! for the
' Day will be great, who ſhall
' be able to ſtand in it, but the
' pure in Heart, and them that
' have made the Lord *Jehovah*
' their Choice, and love him a-
' bove all Things, as well in times
' of Peace, as in times of Diſtreſs,
' ſuch ſhall dwell with the Lord
' for ever.

' And now, O you Magiſtrates,
' conſider what you are doing;
' and you that are Fathers of
' Children, Oh diſhonour not your
' gray Hairs ſo much, as that you
' ſhould be found nouriſhing of
' ſuch ungodly Actions. Oh!

' conſider

' conſider your Places, and where-
' fore the Lord created you, it
' was to ſerve him, and not to
' ſerve Sin, nor Uncleanneſs.
' And wherefore did the Lord our
' God, who is Rich in his Mer-
' cies, ordain Means or a Way
' whereby Men might eſcape the
' Snare, but that he would have
' all to do well, and live in his
' Favour for ever. Oh! be you
' all awakened this Day, and be
' you rouzed up, and Sleep not in
' Security, for Deſtruction is near
' if you do not ſpeedily Repent.
' Oh conſider the *Sodomites* of old,
' how they were toiling, and no-
' thing would ſatisfie them but
' the Servants of the moſt High
' God, that he had ſent to warn
' them; and inſtead of being
' warned by them, they the more
' provoked the Juſt and Holy
' God, who willeth not the Death

' of

‘ of Sinners, but had rather they
‘ would return and live; and
‘ therefore hath he ſent his Ser-
‘ vants early and late to warn the
‘ People; that by taking warn-
‘ ing they might eſcape the Wrath
‘ of the moſt high God, that all
‘ are liable to fall into, that are
‘ adding Sin unto Sin. And tru-
‘ ly I know nothing more likely
‘ to draw down the Vengeance of
‘ the Dreadful and Terrible God,
‘ than to cruelly uſe his Children,
‘ and to make them to groan un-
‘ der their Oppreſſion, as *Pharaoh*
‘ did in his Day; until their
‘ Groans pierced the Ears of the
‘ Lord, and he ſaid, *I have heard*
‘ *the Groanings of my People, and*
‘ *I am come down to deliver*
‘ *them.* And truly our God is the
‘ ſame, as great in Power, and as
‘ mighty to deliver at this Day, as
‘ he was in that Day. And truly

‘ if

'if you do thus go on, as you 'have already done, your Days 'will be ſhorten'd, and you ſhall 'not proſper. Therefore conſi-'der it in Time, I intreat you, as 'you tender the Good of your 'own Souls, and your Childrens, 'be not Patterns of Cruelty to 'ſucceeding Generations, leave 'not your Names upon Record 'for ſuch ungodly Actions, and 'unchriſtian-like Dealings, as 'perſecuting your honeſt Neigh-'bours for keeping their Conſci-'ences void of Offence towards 'God, and all Men; for it is be-'cauſe we fear the great God of 'Heaven and Earth that made us, 'and gave us our Breath and Be-'ing, and durſt not betray our 'Lord and Maſter, as *Judas* did 'in his Day; but mark what be-'came of him. I ſay, becauſe 'we durſt not deny the Lord,

'nor

'nor wrong our own Souls, 'therefore are we Sufferers this 'Day under your Cruelty. And 'as I have already ſaid, that the 'juſt and righteous God of Hea-'ven and Earth, who will one 'Day plead with all People, and 'not one ſhall eſcape from his 'Tribunal Seat without a juſt 'Recompence of Reward for 'their Deeds done in their Life-'time. I ſay again, he is no Re-'ſpecter of Perſons, he regardeth 'not the Rich no more than the 'Poor, he is juſt in all his Judg-'ments, and equal in his Ways, 'ever bleſſed and honoured be his 'worthy Name, and his honou-'rable Truth, ſaith my Soul, for 'ever, and for evermore, *Amen.*

'Theſe Things have been 'weightily upon my Spirit, and 'for the clearing of my Conſci-'ence have I writ them, deſiring

'your

'your Moderation may appear, 'and that noble Spirit may ariſe 'in you, that was in them of old, 'who *tried all Things, and held 'faſt that which was good.* How-'ever it be, whether you will hear, 'or forbear, clear ſhall I be in 'the Sight of my God; who ſaid 'to his Servant in the Days of 'old, *If thou warn the Wicked, 'and they turn not from their 'Wickedneſs, yet thou haſt deliver-'ed thy Soul, but his Blood ſhall 'be upon his own Head.*'

ELIZABETH STIRREDGE.

And it further liveth with me to leave a Relation of our Sufferings, Trials, and Impriſonment in the Year 1683, that if it may fall to any of your Lots to ſuffer for Truth's Teſtimony, or for the Anſwer of a good Conſcience in any

any Caſe whatever, I mean in Things relating to the Anſwer of a good Conſcience towards God, which you may be aſſured to meet withal during the Time of your Pilgrimage here. Well, I have this to ſay, and this Teſtimony to bear for the living God, and his everlaſting Mercies, that amongſt the many Bleſſings, and Favours and Deliverances, that we are made Partakers of from Year to Year, for theſe ſeven and thirty Years; which bleſſed be the Name and Power of our God, he hath made me a living Witneſs, and an Enjoyer of his bleſſed Truth: And amongſt all the bleſſed Seaſons of his Love, this was the greateſt of Mercies unto me, for the God of Heaven and Earth was with us at our Down-lying, and Up-riſing; and whilſt we ſlept, he kept us, and when

we awak'd, he was preſent with us, the Right Hand of his Power upheld us, and his good Spirit ſuſtained us, and made hard Things eaſie unto us, and bitter Things ſweet. When we awaked in the Night Seaſon, ſpiritual Groans aſcended unto him, and in the Morning Light, living Thankſgiving and high Praiſes was returned unto him that liveth for evermore; who was the God and Father of all our Mercies and Bleſſings, and gave us Strength, Courage and Boldneſs, to ſtand faithful unto our Teſtimony, to the Praiſe of the Lord. The Terror of evil Times did not affright us, though our Enemies determined our Ruine and Deſtruction, and pleaſed themſelves in afflicting of us.

The Way and Manner of our going to Priſon, and by whom we were perſecuted.

ONE *Robert Croſs*, Prieſt of the Pariſh of *Chew-magna*, in the County of *Somerſet* (whither we removed ſome Time before, and where we then dwelt) who was a *great Perſecutor* twenty Years before, but had left it for ſome Years; until he began afreſh with us, his Rage being again renewed againſt Friends, for their Faithfulneſs to the Lord, and his bleſſed Truth. He was greatly offended, but againſt me in particular was he enraged greatly; to that Degree, that he ſaid, *If he could but live to ſee me ruined, and my Huſband for my ſake, he cared not if he died next Day.* And that which enraged

ged him againſt me was, I being with a Neighbour that lay very weak, and on her Death-Bed, there being ſeveral of the ſaid Prieſt's Congregation, I had a Teſtimony amongſt them, declaring a Day of Mortality to them, which accordingly fell out to three or four in two Weeks time, which was taken Notice of; and the Prieſt being told of it, was enraged as aforeſaid, and contrived and made uſe of ſeveral Inſtruments for the carrying on of his curſed Work. He ſent to the neighbouring Juſtice, and threatned him, That it ſhould coſt him an Hundred Pounds, if he did not put the King's Laws in Execution againſt the *Quakers*, as the Juſtice told me himſelf, upon a Time when they took me from a Burial, and had me before them; the manner of which comes

comes up before me at this Time.

It being my Lot to be at the Burial of a Daughter of one profeſſing Truth, where I had a Teſtimony to the People, many being there of the Prieſt's Company, which greatly offended him. The next Week after, the Father of this young Woman dying alſo; the Day of his Burial happening on the very Day that ſeveral Juſtices were met at their Petty-Seſſions, near the Burying-Place of Friends, they ſent a Warrant, with ſome Officers, into our Burying-Yard, to bring away Preacher and Hearers (if any one there was that did take upon them to preach) there being a great Concourſe of People, many coming in with the Officers, to ſee what they would do unto us; and a very great Company with

with the Corps. And no ſooner were we come into the Yard, and the Multitude, but the Power of the Lord ſeized upon me, and made me to tremble, that I could hardly ſtand on my Feet; but by taking hold on a Friend that was near me, I ſaid; *There is a Day coming, in the which the God of Heaven and Earth will be too ſtrong for the ſtout hearted amongſt you; therefore Repent, and amend your Lives, while you have a Day, and a Time, for as the Tree falls, ſo it lieth, and as Death leaves, Judgment finds, for there is no Repentance in the Grave; therefore haſten, haſten to Repentance, and Amendment of Life, for the great God of Heaven and Earth will thin this Nation, for the People are too many that are ſinning againſt the Lord.* This, and much more ran through me, for my Heart was opened

opened, and my Spirit greatly enlarged by the mighty Power of the Lord, and drawn forth in Bowels of Love towards the People; for I ſaw the Tears running down many Faces, and many ſaid, *they would never be again as they had been.* And the Officer ſtanding by me with a Warrant in his Pocket, he exceedingly trembled, and could hardly open the Warrant without rending it, crying, *Oh! that I had been twenty Miles from my Habitation, that I had not had a Hand in this Work this Day; pray don't you take it ill of me, for I am forced to it; you muſt go with me before the Juſtices, but I wiſh I had been farther off, then I had had no Hand in troubling of you, pray don't you be angry with me.* I ſaid, *don't be troubled ſo much, I am not offended, I will go with thee.*

So

So when we came before them (the Juſtices) one of them was greatly enraged againſt me; he ſaid, *You are an Old Propheteſs, I know you of old*; (he might well ſay ſo, for he was one of them that I bore a dreadful Teſtimony amongſt Ten Years before.) He greatly threatned me, and ſaid, *I ſhould go to Priſon, and he would ruine my Huſband*; *but where is he? He careth little for you, I will warrant you, elſe he would have come with you, and not have ſuffered you to be ſent to Priſon by your ſelf*; *you are a troubleſome Woman*, *Parſon* Croſs *complains of you, you ſcatter his Flock, and have done him more Injury than all the* Quakers *ever did*; *you made an Oration at the Daughter's Grave the laſt Week, and now at the Father's alſo*; *you ſhall certainly go to Priſon, that ſhall be the leaſt I will do*

do unto you. Thus he went on in an outragious Manner, and I ſtood before him, looking ſtedfaſtly upon him, and did not anſwer one Word in all this time; but he continued, and ſaid, *You are a ſubtile Woman, your Tongue is at Liberty when you are with your Conventicle; but now you are Dumb now you are come before us, I will ſend you to Priſon.* I ſaid, *I am not ſo much frighted at a Priſon, as thou thinkeſt I am; but if thou ſend me to Priſon, and ſhorten my Days, becauſe of my Weakneſs, thou wilt but bring innocent Blood upon thy Head, and that will cry aloud for Vengeance.*

He ſaid unto me, *Why do you break the King's Laws then? And why don't you go to Church? You are running headlong into* Popery. I deny the *Pope*, ſaid I, and his Actions. *Do you love the King,*

King, ſaid he? *Yes*, ſaid I. *Why do you not obey his Law then*, ſaid he? *I have broken no Law this Day*, ſaid I: *I was at a Burial, and it is no Breach of Law to bury our Dead. Well*, ſaid he, *you ſay you have broken no Law, will you keep the King's Law for the Time to come, and leave off holding Conventicles, and Preaching?* So far as the King's Laws do not wrong my Conſcience *(ſaid I)* I will keep them, but I will not wrong my Conſcience for the King, nor no Man elſe; and I do not know whether ever the Lord may open my Mouth again; but if he do, and unlooſe my Tongue to ſpeak, I ſhall not keep ſilent. *So, you can talk now, when you pleaſe; but*, (ſaid he to them that ſate by him) *ſhe will be Dumb again by and by.* I will aſk her one Queſtion that ſhall make her Dumb

again. *Well, you ſay you have not broken the King's Laws, you were but at a Burial, but I will warrant you held a Conventicle amongſt the People at* John Hall's *Houſe, before you brought him forth; what ſay you to that?* I did not preſently anſwer him, until he ſaid again, *Why don't you anſwer? I knew ſhe would be Dumb.* Then I anſwered, *I am no Informer,* Judas *was an Informer, when he betrayed his Maſter.* Then he looked on them that were by him, and ſaid, *I tell you, theſe* Quakers *are the ſubtileſt People that ever we have to do withal, there is no dealing with them; one while they will not ſpeak at all, and another while ſuch croſs Anſwers as this; I proteſt I will ſend her to Priſon.* Then he called the Clerk to make my *Mittimus,* and the Officer was called for; then he raged at him,

him, and ſaid, *You ſilly Fellow, you have let all the Men go, and have brought a troubleſome Woman here to trouble us; you ſhould have brought two or three rich Men to have paid for all the Conventicle.* Sir, I did not know them, (ſaid he) *No, I will make you Swear you did not know them, give him the Book, make him Kiſs the Book.* The poor Man was ſo ſcared at it, that he cried, *Pray Sir, don't you do it, I cannot Swear.* Then I looked on the Juſtices, and ſaid, *My Soul is grieved to ſee how you oppreſs Mens Spirits, in forcing of them to wrong their Conſciences; do you not think that the juſt and righteous God will not viſit for theſe Things? Yes, verily, a Day of Reckoning will the great God of Heaven and Earth call for, and dreadful and terrible will it be to all the Workers of Iniquity.*

Then the other Juſtice that ſate by, and had forborn medling all the Time, being a moderate Man, who was not forward in perſecuting his Neighbours; he ſeeing the other ſo furious, ſaid, *Come, let us come to the Matter in hand; this Woman was at a Burial, and there are many Religions in the World, and all have their Way to bury their Dead, and we cannot hinder them: But come Officer, let us know the Truth of the Matter, was this a Conventicle or no? If it was, there muſt be a Place prepared for her to ſtand up over the People to preach; was it ſo?* No, *Sir*, ſaid the Officer. *What then ſtood ſhe on?* Nothing but the Earth of the Grave. *And what ſaid ſhe?* I never heard the like in all my Life, *ſaid he*; ſhe ſaid there was a Day a coming,

in which the God of Heaven and Earth would be too ſtrong for the Stout-hearted amongſt us; and proclaimed a Day of Mortality amongſt us, and warned us to repent, and amend our Lives; ſurely it made my Heart to tremble. *How! What a Woman make your Heart to tremble?* Yes, *Sir*, and I had no Power to touch her, until ſhe had ſaid all ſhe had in her Heart to ſay. *How*, ſaid the angry Juſtice, *you ſilly fellow, you an Officer, and had a ſevere Warrant in your Pocket, to bring away Preacher and Hearers, and you let her ſay all ſhe had to ſay; you are not fit to be the King's Officer; ſend him away to Priſon.*——— Then he that was the moderate Juſtice, went forth out of the Room, and ſent one to me, to deſire me to go

forth; I not being forward to go, for that honeſt Confeſſion of the poor Man, did me more good as I thought, than my Releaſe at that Time. The Juſtice returning in again, ſaid, *Pray Neighbour* Stirredge *go Home about your Buſineſs.* So I returned to my Habitation again, and had the Peace of the Lord in my Boſom; everlaſting Praiſes be given to the Lord our God for ever.

But this wicked Prieſt, after this Burial, went from Houſe to Houſe and threatned the People, *That it ſhould coſt them Five Pound a-piece for going to hear the* Quakers. And ſome being affrighted at his Threatning, *aſked him Forgiveneſs*; others ſaid, *they would go again.* But ſtill he continued his Rage, for nothing would content him but our Ruine. For after he had ſent the Officers to

our

our Meeting, which dealt roughly with us, by pulling and throwing, and threatning; all which did not content him. But a little Time after, as he was Preaching in his Pulpit, he fell down as dead, whilſt the Words were in his Mouth; as many of the Hearers, being then and there preſent, declared unto me, that they thought he would never have drawn Breath again. But after a great ado, and all Means uſed, that they could make uſe of, he a little recovered again. But, ſaid the People, we hope it will be a Warning to him for to leave off perſecuting his Neighbours. But it was not, for he was heard to ſay, *That if he could but live to accompliſh that Work that he had begun, he did not care if he died preſently.* So he ſeeing his Neighbours not forward in

anſwering his Will to the full; he ſends to *Briſtol* for *John Hellier*, with more of his Confederates, who was the great Perſecutor at *Briſtol*, whom he thought did his Work to the full; for they came in with many Officers into our Meeting at *Chewmagna*, five Miles from *Briſtol*, where we were ſolemnly met together to wait upon the great God of Heaven and Earth; they ruſhed in amongſt us, and arreſted us all in the King's Name, and left a Guard upon us, and went to the Prieſt's Houſe to Dinner, and ſtaid near two Hours; in which Time, we had our ſolemn Meeting peaceable, wherein we enjoyed the Preſence of the Lord, to our Souls Comfort; who never failed his Children in a needful Hour, but always gave them Strength ſuitable to the Day; everlaſting

everlaſting Honour be given to his holy Name for ever.

So after they had fed to the full, and drank in Abundance, they brought with them Faggots of Wood from the Prieſt's, with a Hatchet, and great Axe, and commanded the People to aid and aſſiſt them. So they muſtered up their Force as they came along; and the People ſeeing what Poſture they were in, cried out, *What are you going to do? Blow up the Houſe, and burn the* Quakers, (ſaid they) then down they threw their Wood at the Meeting-Houſe Door, and cried out, *ſet Fire on them, blow up the Houſe.* Then the People cried out, *it will burn our Houſes that are near, and you won't be ſo wicked to burn the People, will you?* Then they came in, in a violent manner, and laid Hands on the

Children, threatning them to burn them; bringing ſome of them out, they ſaid, *We will make them a Warning to all others, and make them repent that ever they were* Quakers *Baſtards.*

Then they laid Hands on us, haling and dragging us along, beating ſome with a Cane, and hewing off the Legs of the Forms, and taking other Forms by the two Ends, and ſo threw the *Friends* backwards that ſate thereon; often calling to our Neighbours to aid and aſſiſt them. Some of them replied, *We cannot work on the Sabbath-day.* So they continued the Work until they had wearied themſelves; then bringing us all out into the Street amongſt many People, I ſaid unto them, *Where is your Teacher?* What is that to you, ſome replied, you ſhall be ſure to ſuffer, if the

reſt

reſt do not. *But where is your Teacher*, I ſaid again? *Let him come and ſee the Fruit of his Labour; this is his Flock, and this is your Sabbath-day's Work, let him come and behold the Fruits of his Labour, and ſee if he will be aſhamed of it.* Then they forced us in again, and *John Hellier* cauſed his Man to make our *Mittimus*, and himſelf committed us to *Ivil-Cheſter* Jail, where we were ſo cruelly uſed, as is after related.

John Hellier being the Head Man in this Work, our Headborough aſked him, *What he ſhould do with us?* He replied, *have them away to Priſon preſently.* The Day being far ſpent, and the Journey long, it being twenty and two Miles to the County Jail, he aſked *J. Hillier, how we ſhould go; for here are many Women that*

cannot

cannot travel on Foot? He anſwered, *I will preſs ſome Carts to haul them along.* I ſaid, *We are not aſham'd to be Carted for the Teſtimony of our Lord and Maſter Jeſus Chriſt.*——*But you ſhall be Carted,* ſaid J. H. *as the Whores are in* Briſtol.

So they returned to their Maſter the Prieſt, and told him they had done his Work effectually, for we were all committed to Priſon. He put off his Hat, and thanked them, and ſaid, *it would add Years to his Life; now he ſhould live in Peace.* But take Notice how ſhort his Days were. The Headborough on the Morrow Morning went and told him, *he muſt provide Horſes to carry the* Quakers *to Priſon on.* He anſwered, *the Devil ſhould have us firſt.* He aſked, *what he ſhould do to get us thither? Drive them* along

along like Hogs, ſaid the Prieſt; (the Officer was our Neighbour, a moderate Man, and what he did, was ſore againſt his Will) he came from the Prieſt's Houſe to ours, and told us what the Prieſt ſaid. So before we were carried to Priſon, he, the Prieſt, was walking in the Steeple-Houſe Yard, where he had a great deal of fooliſh Diſcourſe with ſome Boys that were there at Play, too tedious to mention. But the laſt Words were, *He bid one of the Boys take a Halter and hang himſelf*: And then he fell down as dead. His Family being called, brought forth a Chair, and other Things neceſſary, and lifted him therein, and uſed all means they could, there being many People about him: Some crying out, *don't you diſturb the Old Man, but let him go quietly.* Ay, ſaid others, *let him depart*

depart in Peace, and don't you diſturb him, that his Neighbour's (the Quakers) *may abide at Home, and not go to Priſon.* Some of the Neighbours came into our Shop with Joy, and ſaid, *Now you may abide at Home, for Mr.* Croſs *is fallen down dead in the Church-yard. And he was going Mad before,* ſaid the Mother of one of the Boys; *for,* ſaid ſhe, *he bid my Boy take a Halter and hang himſelf. Lord have Mercy upon me! what wicked Counſel was that of a Miniſter,* ſaid ſhe; *we were in good Hopes that his falling down in the Pulpit would have been a Warning to him,* but we ſee it is not. But after an Hour and Halfs time, he had ſo much Life, as that he called them, that were about him, *Rogues.* So they carried him in his Chair to his Bed, where he remained ſome

Days,

Days, and *died*; but never ſenſible, as I was informed by ſeveral. But we were carried to Priſon before he died, where we had ſuch Entertainment, and hard Uſage, as follows.

Our Keeper *Giles Bale*, and his Wife, put us in the Common-Jail, with three Fellons, that were condemned to be hanged, and would not afford us Straw to lie upon, though we would have paid for it; they locked us up, and carried away the Key with them (they living ſome Diſtance from the Priſon) thereby to prevent the Under-Keeper from ſhewing us any Favour: And the Head-Keeper's Wife ſaid, *There let them be like a Company of Rogues and Whores together; if I had a worſe Place, I would put them therein.*

And

* Note, This Keeper and his Wife ſoon after died, and their Family came to Ruin.

* And truly that was a moſt diſmal Place, where we had neither Stock nor Stone to ſit upon; nor any Reſting-Place to lean againſt, but the black Stone-wall, covered over with Soot, and the damp cold Ground to lie upon. But before we lay down, Three of our Friends that were Priſoners in the Room adjoining to that we were in, put through the Grates in unto us four Duſt (or Chaff) Pillows, and Two Blankets, and a little Straw, whereon we lay down, like a Flock of Sheep in a Penn, in that very Cold Winter, that we never had the like ſince I had a Remembrance; where moſt of us took our Reſt very ſweetly. But when I lay down in that diſmal Place, it came

came into my Heart a Conſideration of theſe Things; ſaying in my Heart, *Lord, thou knoweſt for what we are expoſed to this Hardſhip, it is becauſe we cannot betray our Teſtimony, nor wrong our Conſcience, nor deal treacherouſly with our own Souls. And ſeeing it is ſo; Lord, be thou our Comforter in this needful Time; for it is thy Preſence that makes hard Things eaſy, and bitter Things ſweet, and thou haſt ſweetened the Waters of a bitter Cup; Oh! thou Phyſician of Value, that can ſtrengthen both Soul and Body, be with us this Night, and all the Nights and Days that we have to live in this World.* Then the Lord was pleaſed to open my Heart unto him, and to fill it with his living Mercy, and comfortable Preſence, inſomuch that it overflowed my whole Heart, that I could have Sung aloud

aloud of the Goodneſs of the Lord, and of his Mercies and Bleſſings beſtowed upon us. But I looking over my fellow Priſoners, and ſeeing them ſo ſound aſleep, I did forbear to open my Mouth; but in the Morning there came many People to the Priſon Door, to ſee how many of us were dead with our hard Fare; ſome of them were ſure (as they ſaid) that I was dead, for I look'd as if I would not live until the Morning. But then finding us all alive and well, they confeſs'd and ſaid, *Surely we were the People of God, if there were any.* That being the firſt Day, we had a Meeting in the Priſon, and many Friends came there, where we had a very good Meeting, and the good Preſence of the Lord was with us and filled our Hearts with Joy and Gladneſs; inſomuch

that

that I was conſtrained to praiſe the Name of the Lord, and magnifie his Power, and to teſtify in the hearing of many People, that we were ſo far from repenting our coming there, that we had great cauſe to give Glory, Honour and Praiſes to the Lord God of Heaven and Earth, for that he had found us worthy to ſuffer for his Name and Truth; for his powerful Preſence was with us, and ſanctified our Afflictions, and made the Priſon like a Palace unto us; and we would not change our State, for all the Glory of the World, if it were profered unto us.

This, and much more ran through me, which I ſhall omit for brevity Sake: But in a Word, great was the Goodneſs and Mercy of the Lord towards us, from Day to Day; that I have ſometimes

times ſaid, *ſurely the Lord is honouring his People; he is weaning of them from this World.* It ſeemed to me as if I had no Habitation but the Priſon; then was the Time for the Lord to reveal his Secrets unto his Children, that he had tried and proved in ſuch Things; for it was Faithfulneſs that rendered the faithful Servant acceptable in his Maſter's Sight, and cauſed him to ſay, *Well done, thou good and faithful Servant, thou haſt been faithful in a Little, be thou Ruler over Much:* for I cannot believe, that him that is not true to a Little, will ever be made Ruler over much. No, no, therefore keep to Truth in all Things, and to the plain Language, and teach your Children ſo to do, and as I have ſaid. In that time of great Afflictions, and Sufferings, and parting of many,

Wife from Huſband, and Huſband from Wife, and both from tender Children ; then was the Lord pleaſed to reveal his Secrets into his Children. And ſeeing the Goodneſs of the Lord from Day to Day, and being made ſenſible of his gathering Arm from Day to Day, a great Concern came upon me for many *careleſs ones*, that had deprived themſelves of that bleſſed Benefit that our Souls enjoyed with the Lord. Oh! in conſideration of them, and their deplorable State, my Soul hath often been poured forth before the Lord, crying, *Oh Lord, that they may come and partake with us of thy great Mercies, as we do from Day to Day.* Then it would often times come up before me, the great Diſhonour they had brought upon the Lord, and his bleſſed Truth, by their Unfaithfulneſs, and

and Unbelief. Yea, great Diſhonour indeed, they could not truſt the Lord, as if he had no Power or Strength to preſerve them. Then I cried, O Lord, many are weak and feeble, and the Cruelty of Men hath been great, terrible, and deſperately wicked; and thou haſt ſuffered them to be very cruel, to the Aſtoniſhment of many; inſomuch that many a poor Soul hath been toſſed as with a Tempeſt; and for want of keeping to that bleſſed Guide and Rock Chriſt Jeſus, who alone was able to give them Boldneſs and Courage to go through the Work of this Day of Affliction, many a Poor one hath fallen, not knowing they ſhould be deprived of ſo great a Reward, that we have, and do enjoy; bleſſed be thy Holy Name for ever. And Lord, thou knoweſt that my Heart

Heart is pained within me, my Soul is in Travail, and my Bowels are rolling towards the Poor and the Diſtreſſed, the toſſed with Tempeſt, and not comforted; the Enemy of their Souls is buſie to caſt them down, and to fill their Minds with Trouble and Unbelief, always caſting before them their Unfaithfulneſs, and would fain keep them in Bondage, and from returning unto thee by true Repentance, that thou mayeſt heal their Backſlidings, and teach them to be more faithful for time to come. O Lord, what ſhall I do for them? They are often in my Remembrance; Lord, open my Heart in Prayer more and more, and bow thy Ear to the Supplication of thy Servant, as thou haſt done many a time; and accept of the Prayer of thy Servant, for them who cannot Pray for

for themſelves. O Lord, if it may ſtand with thy bleſſed Will, once more to afford them a Day of Viſitation, and try them again. O Lord, deal not with them according to their Deſerts; but Lord, I pray thee, have Compaſſion on the Works of thy Hands, and remember poor Mortals this Day; for ſurely many of them are greatly diſtreſſed, and compaſſed about with many Temptations, and my Heart is pained for them. And in this mournful State, the Lord was pleaſed to ſpeak comfortably unto me in the Secret of my Heart, in a living Spring of Life, and ſaid; 'The Time of the Delive-
'rance of my People draweth
'near, and nearer than many are
'aware of; though I have ſuf-
'fered their Enemies for a Time
'to triumph over them, yet too
'many

'many have grown high and
'lofty, and forgotten the Days of
'their Diſtreſs and Calamity, and
'what State they were in when
'I firſt found them out; as it
'were without Hope: Then did
'I ſend forth my Light and my
'Truth, which many received
'with Thankfulneſs of Heart, and
'with a ready Mind, and bowed
'thereunto, and yielded Obedi-
'ence for a Time. But after I had
'confounded their Enemies, and
'appeared for their Deliverance,
'and enriched them greatly, then
'they forgot the Days of their
'Diſtreſs and Poverty, and the
'many Promiſes that they made
'unto me in the Day when they
'were ſorely beſet with many
'Enemies, within, and without.
'But ſince I have appeared for
'them, and confounded their
'Foes, and have done more for

‘ them, than they looked for, or
‘ expected at my Hands, how
‘ have they forgotten to pay their
‘ Vows unto me, that many of
‘ them made unto me in the Days
‘ of their Diſtreſs? And how far
‘ are they gone into old *Iſrael*'s
‘ Sins? Nay, have not ſome ſo
‘ much loſt their Senſes, as to put
‘ Light for Darkneſs, and Dark-
‘ neſs for Light? But bleſſed are
‘ all they who continue truly
‘ humble, for my Covenant is
‘ firm, for ever eſtabliſhed, and
‘ never to be altered with my
‘ Remnant that have been faith-
‘ ful, that have parted with all
‘ that I have called for, for my
‘ Name and Truth's Sake; and
‘ who have had no Helper in the
‘ Earth but me, nor none to lean
‘ upon, nor to confide in, but the
‘ Arm of my Power; who could
‘ not turn to the Right Hand, nor

‘ to

‘ to the Left, unleſs I go before
‘ them ; Oh theſe are mine, and
‘ my Secrets ſhall be with them,
‘ they ſhall be found worthy to
‘ ſtand in the Gap, and to inter-
‘ ceed for the People, notwith-
‘ ſtanding their Poverty, and the
‘ Nothingneſs of themſelves, yet
‘ they ſhall be as Inſtruments in
‘ my Hand, to proclaim my
‘ dreadful Day, and the Day of
‘ my Vengeance amongſt the
‘ People, that many may hear,
‘ and fear, and turn unto me by
‘ true Repentance, that I may
‘ heal their Backſlidings, and re-
‘ ceive them freely. And in order
‘ thereunto, I will bring a Day of
‘ Deliverance for my People, and
‘ many of them ſhall praiſe my
‘ Name, and tell of my wondrous
‘ Works, and what I have done
‘ for them, that others may be
‘ encouraged to be faithful to the

‘ Reſidue of their Days; for I
‘ have ſeen many bemoaning
‘ themſelves in Deſolation, and
‘ ſorely bewailing their loſt Con-
‘ dition; for many have been
‘ made deſolate, by reaſon of the
‘ Cruelty of the wicked One, and
‘ they being deſolate, have mourn-
‘ ed unto me, and I have ſeen the
‘ Bemoaning of my People; and
‘ I have ſeen the Travails of the
‘ Faithful for the Unfaithful; and
‘ for the Cries of the Poor, and
‘ the Sighings of the Needy, will
‘ I ariſe, and I will work a Way
‘ for the Deliverance of my Peo-
‘ ple; for the Time is near, that
‘ the Priſon ſhall not encloſe
‘ them, but they ſhall come forth,
‘ and declare and publiſh my
‘ wondrous Works; for I will
‘ work, and none ſhall be able to
‘ hinder; and many ſhall pro-
‘ claim my dreadful Day, and the

‘ Day

'Day of my Vengeance; that 'many may hear, and fear, and 'return unto the Lord by true 'Repentance.'

Oh this was the glad Tidings that livingly lived with me Night and Day in the time of my Confinement; Oh it was great Satisfaction to my travelling Soul, it answered the very Petition that many a time I had put up in the Night Season unto the living God; everlasting Honour, Glory and Renown be given unto him that liveth for evermore, saith my Soul. For surely I cannot but admire the wonderful Loving-kindness, and Mercies and Favours of the Lord our God, the High and Holy One that inhabits Eternity in condescending to the Poor, and to the Low, and the Little; he hath revealed his Secrets to many who have not

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thought themſelves worthy to be made Partakers of ſo great a Benefit; but their greateſt Concern hath been for the Redemption of their Souls from under Satan's Power; and when that was done, now Lord preſerve me in thy Fear for ever, and keep me from Sinning againſt thee, that my Soul may not go into Captivity again.

This was the chiefeſt Concern of my Spirit, in the Time of my great Afflictions, in the Paſſage out of *Egypt*'s Land and through the Wilderneſs, where I met with many Straits, and great Hardſhips, and many Enemies; and many crooked Ways, and By-paths that the Enemy of my Soul had caſt up to catch my Feet in; but the Lord in his infinite Goodneſs, who never failed his Children that ſought him above all

all Things, he provided a Way for me to eſcape his Snares, as he did his *Iſrael* in former Days, glory be given unto his holy Name for ever. This was Part of the Exerciſe during the Time of my Confinement with my Huſband, and many more of the Servants of the moſt High God, in *Ivelcheſter-Goal.* And when the Time drew near of our Deliverance, when I came out of the Priſon, to go to the Seſſions held at *Browton*, I aſſuredly believed that the Time was near (that lived in my Heart) that the Priſon ſhould not encloſe us any longer, though it was altogether unlikely; for our Perſecutors were exceeding wicked againſt us, although our grand Perſecutor the Prieſt was at that Time taken off in a very remarkable Manner, as before-mentioned; notwithſtanding, many re-

mained, that were very Cruel, and acted cruelly and unjuſtly againſt us; and put by the Jury that were choſen of our Neighbours, and called another Jury preſently in the Court, ſuch as they thought moſt fit for their Turns. Then the Clerk began, and read an Indictment, *viz.* *That we were found, or taken at an unlawful Aſſembly, in force of Arms, in contempt of the King, and his Laws, Crown and Dignity, to the Terror of the People*, &c. And he ſaid to the Jury, *Gentlemen, you have heard their Indictment, if you find them Guilty, you find for the King.* And a Biſhop that ſate upon the Bench with the Judge, ſtood up and ſaid, *That the firſt Quaker that ever was in* England, *was hanged for being one concerned in the Popiſh Plot.* I anſwered, That the firſt that was called a Quaker,

Quaker, was now alive. He ſaid again. *He could prove by ſufficient Witneſs, that he was hanged for being one in the Popiſh Plot.* Then the Biſhop being enraged, by reaſon he was contradicted, held up his Hand towards us, and bid us *have a Care what we ſaid, for them that had Eſtates amongſt us, it ſhould coſt them their Eſtates, and them that had not, ſhould lie in Priſon whilſt they periſh'd.* Such was their great Rage and Wickedneſs againſt us, that it was very grievous to hear them; but there was a ſecret Cry many Times ran through my Heart unto the Lord; *Lord work for thy Name Sake, and confound their Wiſdom, and Rage, and bring down their Proud and wicked Spirits, and bring to nought their miſchievous Contrivance, that they have been contriving againſt thy innocent People, as they have been making them-*

ſelves Merry, and drinking Wine to the full, and feeding themſelves with the Fatneſs of the Earth (as *Dives* did) *and have what their Hearts luſt after, and yet none of all theſe Things will give them Content nor Satisfaction; no, no, but the Deſtruction of a poor deſpiſed People: Oh Lord make thy Power known this Day, and that that will make moſt for thy Honour, and the Proſperity of thy bleſſed Truth, do thou bring to paſs this Day, that it may be known that there is a God in Heaven that can rule the Hearts of the Children of Men, and make them to know that there is a God whom all Men ought to fear, honor, and obey.*

And ſurely the Lord was pleaſed to hear the Prayers of his Children, and to anſwer the Requeſt of them in the Days of their Afflictions; for this Jury whom they choſe, as they thought, moſt fit

fit for their Work, was long abſent; but when they came with their Verdict, the Fore-man could not readily ſpeak, but looked much like a dead Man. Then the Biſhop in a Rage, asked him, *Whether we were Guilty, or not Guilty?* He anſwered, *Guilty of not going to Church, but not of a Riot.* Of not going to Church, ſaid the Biſhop, that is not the Matter in Hand, guilty of a Riot you mean. Then the Reſt of the Jury ſaid, *No, my Lord, guilty of not going to Church, but not of a Riot.* You mean of an unlawful Aſſembly then, *Yes*, ſaid the Fore-man; *Why that is a Riot in Law*, ſaid the Biſhop. Then I anſwered, *We are no Rioters:* Then the Cryer of the Court ſhaked his white Rod over my Head, and ſaid, *Be Silent.* I ſaid, *No, we may not be ſilent, we are a ſober*

ſober People, and live a good Life and Converſation, we do unto all Men, as we would be done by; I never wronged Man, Woman, nor Child, nor I know none that have ought againſt us unleſs for the Anſwer of a good Conſcience; here are of our Neighbours that can teſtify for us. The Cryer continued ſhaking his white Rod over my Head, crying, *Huſh, and be Silent.* Then one of the Juſtices, a ſober ancient Man, ſaid, *Let the Woman alone to ſpeak for her ſelf, ſhe ſpeaketh Truth, and Reaſon, let more of them ſpeak; you are many againſt them, and if they may not be ſuffered to ſpeak for themſelves, it is very hard.* That a little ſtop'd the Rage of the Biſhop, and Judge; then they called to our Keeper to take us away, and to bring us when they called for us again; ſo they went

to

to their Dinner, and we with our Keeper. But no ſooner were they gone, but a great Concern fell upon me to follow them; I could neither eat nor drink, but was preſs'd in my Spirit to go after them; and when I came, they were ſitting down to their Dinner, with a Noiſe of Muſick playing at the going up of their Diſhes, which were very many of the choiceſt Things. I went in amongſt them whilſt they were at Dinner, but I did not ſee a fit Opportunity, but waited till they had Dined; and as they were riſing, I came in with a great Dread and Awe over my Spirit. One of the great Men came to me, and ſaid, *good Woman, who would you ſpeak withal?* I ſaid, *the Judge of the Seſſions*; he ſaid, *I am the Judge, if you have any thing to ſay, I am ready to hear*

hear you. But he not being the Man that ſate upon the Bench that Day, I ſaid, *Thou art not the Man I am going unto.* Then he turned towards the Judge that ſate that Day, and ſaid, *this Woman hath ſomething to ſay to you.* Then one of the Juſtices laid his Hand upon my Shoulder, and ſaid, *Let this good Woman have what ſhe will to ſay, we will hear her.* But I getting near to the Judge, and Biſhop, who ſate at the upper End of the Table, ſaid; 'Foraſmuch as you are all here, 'that ſate in Judgment againſt us 'this Day, I have a Concern up-'on my Spirit in Vindication of 'our Innocency; we are well 'known amongſt our Neigh-'bours to be a ſober and an ho-'neſt People, that live a good 'Life and Converſation; we do 'no Wrong to none, we can do

'Good

'Good to them that hate us, and
'Pray for them that deſpitefully
'uſe us, I know none that has
'ought againſt us, but concerning
'the Law of our God; notwith-
'ſtanding all this, we are num-
'bered among Tranſgreſſors, and
'have been turned into the com-
'mon Jail amongſt Felons; our
'Trades and Families lie liable to
'be ruined, and all theſe Things
'ſhall not befall us, but you ſhall
'underſtand thereof, for I am
'here this Day to teſtify the
'Truth of it; for which the Juſt
'and Righteous God will one
'Day plead; and as ſure as the
'Day gives its Light, and the Co-
'venant of the Day and Night
'cannot be broken, there is not
'a Man here, nor any that draws
'Breath in the open Air, that
'ſhall eſcape the tribunal Seat of
'God's divine Juſtice, till a Sen-

'tance

'tance of a juſt Recompence of
'Reward every one ſhall receive
'for their Deeds done in their
'Life-time, whether they be
'good or evil.'

And I can truly ſay, the Dread of the Lord was upon me, inſomuch that they were ſmitten, and Paleneſs appeared in their Faces, and had not a Word to ſay. But when I was going forth, ſome hectoring young Man ſaid, *I thought it would ſo, when this Woman came in, I thought ſhe would preach when the Spirit moved her*; *but why would you ſuffer her* (ſaid he to the Man of the Houſe) *to deſturb your Gueſts?* Then he ſaid, *get you down Stairs, or I will throw you down.* I turned in again, and ſaid, *What Wrong have I done unto any one here, if I could have kept my Conſcience clear in ſtaying away, I had not been here*

this

this Day; but whether you will hear or forbear, I ſhall be clear in the Day of Account, of all your Blood. So I left them, and returned to my Place, and had great Peace with the Lord; but we were not called into Court no more that Day; but the Morrow Morning early, we were called to come into Court, in order to finiſhing our Trial, but the Biſhop came no more into the Court, that we ſaw, or knew of; and the Judge was very moderate that Day; a great Change indeed; he only called to the Keeper to bring up the *Quakers*, and called ſome of us by Name, and ſaid, *You that ſtand here indicted, the Court Fines you Five Shillings a-piece*; and never ſpake a Word of Payment of the Money, but broke up the Court (their Buſineſs being done) and went their way, and our Keeper alſo

alſo left us, to our great Admiration: Above Fourſcore Priſoners that were before them that Day, were freed.

After Dinner, the Cryer came in amongſt us where we were, and ſaid, *Neighbours, and Friends, I am glad for your Releaſe; you are the People of God; Men would ruin you, but God will not ſuffer them ſo to do.* And ſaid, *where is the Woman?* I ſaid, *here am I;* he ſaid, *the Lord bleſs you, I pray you forgive me, for I intended no Harm, nor would not do any thing againſt you; though I ſhook my Rod over your Head, I did it in no Evil towards you, ſo I hope my honeſt Neighbours and Friends, you will forgive me.* We anſwer'd, *Yes freely*; and was very loving to him, and deſired his Well-being for ever. He went his way in much Love, praying God to bleſs

us,

us, and we returned to our Habitations with the Peace of the Lord in our Boſoms; everlaſting Praiſes be given unto the Lord our God for evermore.

Now, my Children, the End and Aim of my leaving this to you, and all upon Record, is, that future Ages may know that the great God of Heaven and Earth, that brought up the Children of *Iſrael* out of *Egypt*'s Bondage, that made the Waters ſtand on Heaps, and brought his Children through on dry Land, and over-turned *Pharaoh* and all his Hoſt, he it is that is our God in whom we have believed, and his Power is not leſſened that he cannot ſave, nor his Arm ſhortned, that it cannot deliver this Day, as in former Days, Praiſes to his Name for ever.

This,

This, my dear Children, you know is certainly true; but for you and all others to keep in Remembrance theſe and all other Mercies that the Lord our God hath beſtowed upon us, ever ſince he gathered us to be a People, which is Eight and Thirty Years ago; for I was in the Nineteenth Year of my Age, when *J. Camm* and *John Audland* came firſt to *Briſtol*, in the Dread and Power of the great God of Heaven and Earth; and I am a living Witneſs that his powerful Preſence was with them, and made their Miniſtry ſo dreadful, that it pierced the Hearts of Thouſands. Oh the Dread and Terror that ſeized upon my Heart at the Sound of *John Audland*'s Voice, and the Sight of him, before I rightly underſtood what he ſaid. But before the Meeting was over, the Spirit

Spirit of the Lord moved in my Heart, and in the Light I came to ſee my woful and deplorable State, which made me to cry to God for Mercy ; a Day never to be forgotten by me. And now I have arrived to the ſeven and fiftieth Year of my Age. Oh! the many Deliverances, both inward and outward, have I been made a living Witneſs of. The many Decrees that have been ſealed againſt us, the many Threatnings of Ruin and Deſtruction have been ſounded in our Ears, how have we been as killed all the Day long, and counted as Sheep for the Slaughter ? And yet behold we are alive to this Day, to praiſe the Lord. How have the Enemies roared, both inwardly, and outwardly, and have come with open Mouth to devour at once ? And how hath

our

our God helped us? The great God of Heaven and Earth is he that hath been our Strength in a needful Time; and hath ſuſtained his People by the Strength of his Arm, and hath born up our Heads above the Waters, that they have not drowned nor overturned us to this very Day, everlaſting Honour be given unto the Lord for ever. But our Enemies hath he overturned, and broken their Bands in ſunder, and have made them to bow under his dreadful Power, and hath taken many off in his Diſpleaſure. Oh! what ſhall I ſay in the Behalf of all theſe his wondrous Works, that mine Eyes have ſeen; but more eſpecially the inward Work of Regeneration? Oh! my Tongue is not able to demonſtrate the tenth Part of it, that the Lord hath been pleaſed to bring me through

through ; Oh ! what ſhall I ſay at the Remembrance of them, all which at this Time is livingly come up before me ; but bow before the Lord, and prize his Mercies for evermore.

And now, my dear Children, keep faithful to the Lord, and his bleſſed Truth that you have been trained up in, and your Eyes ſhall ſee for your ſelves, as mine Eyes have for my ſelf ; be faithful to the Motion of the Spirit of Chriſt Jeſus in your own Boſoms, and don't you overlook the little Things, for they that be not faithful in a little, ſhall never be made Ruler over much. Therefore don't you exerciſe yourſelves in any Matter too high for you, but mind the Motion of the Spirit in your own Hearts, and hearken diligently to the Voice of the Lord, that your Souls may live ;

and

and keep the Lord always in your Remembrance, that you ſin not againſt him; and remember to keep to the daily Croſs, which will crucifie all the Motions of the Fleſh, and keep you alive to God, and near unto him; and in ſo doing, you will know his Councel; and ſeek the Kingdom of Heaven, and the Righteouſneſs thereof, above all Things in this World, and other Things ſhall be added unto you; for I will aſſure you this is the Way that my Soul hath travelled in, and have found Favour with God. And one thing more that I have experienced, which hath been of moment unto me, that in all my Afflictions, and Pain, and Sorrow of Body or Mind, I have not had an Eye to confide in Man, but have applied my Heart to the Lord, and have poured forth my

Soul

Soul unto him, O thou Phyſician of Value, that can cure both Soul and Body; thou that knows better how to adminiſter to my Neceſſity, than I can aſk of Thee; from thee alone do I look for Comfort, for there is none beſides thee that can adminiſter true Comfort to me. And the Lord, in his due Time, hath appeared to my Comfort and Satisfaction, and hath eſtabliſhed my Goings, and hath kept my Feet from falling, and my Heart from going aſtray, unto this very Day; everlaſting Honour be given unto his Name for evermore, *Amen.*

And ſince I have ſeen the good Effects of my Labour and Travel, I earneſtly beg of the Lord Night and Day, to do for you, as he hath done for me. Oh! how hath my Prayers aſcended unto the Lord, in Publick, and in

Private, and in my Concerns, when my Hand hath been at my Labour, and on the High-way ſide. Oh my Children, let it not be in vain, for I can truly ſay, that you have been the Children for whom many Prayers have been offered.

Therefore conſider it, when I am gone from you, and can no longer watch over you, for my Time is much over, I have no long Time here on this ſide the Grave, but I ſhall be gone, and ſee you no more in this World, nor take more Care for you, nor give more Counſel; therefore have I written this little Account of Part of my Travels out of *Egypt*'s Bondage, towards the Land of Reſt and Peace; which have been through great Difficulties, and through many a ſore Combate with the Enemy of my Soul's

Soul's Peace, many a fiery Trial, and through a vale of Tears; but don't you be diſcouraged at it, for you know how wonderfully the great God of Heaven and Earth hath been my Support in time of Need, and hath born up my Spirit, and given me more Strength than I could have believed, if it had been declared unto me. And now I ſeeing ſo many Profeſſors of Truth, at this Day, going on at ſuch an eaſy Rate, and ſo careleſs, and ſo indifferent, ſo ſlighting the Croſs, and ſo little regarding the Travail of their Souls, and ſo little concerned for their Souls Good, and ſo ſlighting the Teſtimonies of Truth, and ſpending their precious Time and Seaſon, that God hath put into their Hands, as if Heaven's Glory, and a State of Eternity, were not worth the

looking after; and as if there was no God to puniſh for theſe Things, nor any Day of Account.

Oh! the Conſideration of theſe Things hath been weightily upon my Spirit for many Months, and Morning and Evening hath my Heart been afflicted, ſaying within my ſelf, 'Lord, what will become of ſuch? I fear the Viſitation of many of them is almoſt over. Oh! how does my Soul lament for them; and have the greater Concern upon my Spirit, to interceed with the Lord to preſerve me and mine for ever. Oh Lord, my Soul is concerned, and my Heart is bowed at this time in the Senſe and feeling of thy everlaſting Love, and Mercies, and Bleſſings that thou haſt beſtowed upon me a Poor Diſtreſſed Object, till thou took pitty on me, and looked on me in the

'Days

' Days of my Diſtreſs, and ſpread
' a Skirt over me. And now in
' Conſideration of this thy great
' Love that thou ſhewedſt unto
' me when I was bemoaning my
' ſelf like a Dove without a Mate,
' or like a mournful Widow, or
' like a Sparrow upon the Houſe-
' top, that is ſitting alone. Oh!
' when it comes up before me,
' Lord, how is my Heart broken,
' and how is my Spirit melted,
' and how doth my Soul love
' the Lord, and deſires for ever-
' more to obey his Voice, and
' to bow to his Scepter, and keep
' Covenant with him, and dwell
' and abide with him for ever;
' that I may be kept faithful all
' my Days.

' And now, Oh Lord my God,
' ſeeing thou haſt been pleaſed
' thus to deal with me, and to
' have a Regard to the low Eſtate

'of thy Handmaid, and haſt heard
'my Prayers, and anſwered many
'a Time; Oh Lord, if I have
'found Favour in thy Sight, this
'once more hear my Petition this
'Evening, and grant me my Re-
'queſt; and Lord, thou that haſt
'kept me all my Life long to
'this very Day, bleſs my Chil-
'dren, by preſerving of them in
'thy Fear, cauſe them to remem-
'ber thy Mercies, and thy Bleſ-
'ſings from Year to Year, and
'from Day to Day; and cauſe
'them to remember what thou
'haſt done for them, and their
'Father and Mother, in the Days
'of their great Affliction, when
'Deſtruction and Ruin were de-
'termined againſt us; and when
'we were almoſt paſt Hope, how
'haſt thou appeared, and con-
'founded our Enemies before our
'Eyes? Lord, let theſe Things

'never

' never be forgotten by me, nor
' them, whilſt we have a Day to
' live upon the Earth: But, Oh
' Lord, I pray thee, bleſs and ſanc-
' tifie all theſe thy Bleſſings and
' Mercies beſtowed upon us, and
' give us a thankful Heart, and
' humble Mind, and more and
' more unite us unto thee, and
' cauſe us to walk worthy of the
' ſame. Oh! that my Heart was
' but worthy enough; for me-
' thinks my Heart is not able to
' ſet forth thy Praiſes enough:
' No, ſurely 'tis impoſſible for
' Tongue to declare thy infinite
' Goodneſs, and thy noble Acts.
' But, Lord, we that have made
' our Choice of thee, and have be-
' lieved in thy Son Chriſt Jeſus,
' have known him to be ſufficient
' Strength in Time of Need; and
' we that have known thy holy
' Arm to be made bare, for the

‘ Deliverance of us out of Thral-
‘ dom, and Captivity, have
‘ known it ſufficient to preſerve
‘ us to this very Day. There-
‘ fore, Oh Lord, ſtrengthen my
‘ Faith, Hope, and Confidence,
‘ that I may ſteadfaſtly believe
‘ that thou wilt preſerve my
‘ Children, when I am gone to
‘ my Reſting-place: Lord, keep
‘ my Family, and thy People;
‘ let not one of them be loſt, or
‘ a Prey to the wicked One: Oh
‘ Lord, if thou ſhouldeſt yet add
‘ more Days to my Life, let me
‘ not ceaſe to Pray for them, and
‘ their Offspring, that I may do
‘ my Endeavour for their Entrance
‘ into thy bleſſed Kingdom, ſo
‘ ſhall I go to my Grave in Peace.
‘ And now O Lord, I do wholly
‘ reſign them into thy Hands, as
‘ knowing right well thou art a-
‘ ble to keep them through Faith

‘ and

‘ and preſerve them all their Days,
‘ and to do more for them than
‘ I am able to ask of thee. Oh
‘ Lord, whatever Exerciſe they
‘ meet withal, Lord ſtrengthen
‘ them, and bear up their Spirits,
‘ that they may not be overcome
‘ with the Temptations of the
‘ wicked One: For, Lord, thy
‘ Power hath been ſufficient to
‘ redeem my Soul. So Lord,
‘ once more do I commit the
‘ keeping of my Spirit, with my
‘ Children, and all thy Flock and
‘ Family upon the Face of the
‘ whole Earth, with whom my
‘ Soul is at Peace, and in Unity;
‘ and do feel the Renewings of thy
‘ Love at this Time, which is the
‘ greateſt Comfort that can be
‘ here enjoyed; therefore does my
‘ Heart, Soul and Spirit, and all
‘ that is within me, return unto
‘ thee, O Lord, all Praiſes, Glory

'and Honour, with hearty Thankſ-
'giving, and pure Obedience for
'evermore. Lord, accept of it
'this Evening, as an Evening Sa-
'crifice from a broken Heart, and
'a contrite Spirit, which thou
'never rejected; for ſurely, O
'Lord, thou art worthy of it,
'from this Time forth, for ever,
'and for evermore, *Amen.*

This was finiſhed the 13th Day of the 2d Month, 1692. By me,

Elizabeth Stirredge, Sen.

☞ The laſt Fourteen Years of her Life after this, ſhe lived at *Hempſtead* in *Hertfordſhire*, whither her Huſband removed, with her and Family, from *Cheew-magna*, in the County of *Somerſet*, in the Year, 1688. And did not travel

travel much Abroad in her latter Days; except once or twice to *Briſtol*, &c. and uſually to the Yearly-Meeting at *London*, once a Year; but laboured moſtly about Home, as ſhe grew aged, and weakly; but often as the Lord afforded her Strength, viſited the neighbouring Meetings in the ſame County; and her Service therein tended to the edifying and comforting of God's Heritage, as many faithful *Friends* in thoſe Parts can bear her Witneſs. And great was her Concern for the Meeting ſhe belonged to, which ſhe frequented ſo long as ſhe was able; many Times going to it through great Weakneſs; and many Living and Powerful Teſtimonies (eſpecially towards her latter End) did ſhe bear in it, exhorting Friends to Faithfulneſs; frequently declaring

ring and ſetting forth the wonderful Power that attended Friends in the Beginning, (and which ſtill doth all the Faithful) of which ſhe often ſpoke, and bore Teſtimony to, in the beginning of her laſt Illneſs, amongſt her own Family. And ſo departed this Life, and laid down her Head in Peace with the Lord, at *Hempſtead* aforeſaid, on the Seventh Day of the Ninth Month, 1706. in the 72d Year of her Age.

A SALUTATION *of my endeared Love in God's Holy Fear and Dread, and for the clearing of my Conſcience, once more unto you of that City of* Briſtol, *amongſt whom my Soul hath ſome Years travelled under many a dreadful Exerciſe, which hath made my Bones to ſhake, and my Heart to tremble before the great God of Heaven and Earth, who will yet further bring his notable Day, wherein all Fleſh ſhall tremble before him.*

AND now in the Senſe of the great Love of God that hath been extended unto you of that City continually, firſt, in ſending of his Servants amongſt you,

you, and endued them with Power from on High, that it wrought effectually upon many, whereby many are brought out of *Egypt*'s Darkneſs, and through the Red-Sea Spiritually, and could ſing to the Lord, as *Moſes* and the Children of *Iſrael* did, when the Lord had wrought wonderfully for their Deliverance, and by a high Hand and a wonderful Power brought them forth: And bleſſed be the Lord God Almighty, and honoured be his worthy Name, and the right Arm of his Strength, there are many living Witneſſes of theſe Things in this our Day: Oh, *dear Friends!* forget it not, but dwell low in the Senſe of your deplorable States that you were in, when firſt the Lord reached unto you, and opened that Eye in you, that let you ſee you were undone for ever,

if

if the Lord did not ariſe for your Deliverance, when many cried out, *for a Saviour, or elſe I periſh for ever.* Oh Friends! what was too dear for us to part with in that Day for the Lord? Truly can my Soul ſay, *That all that ever my Eyes beheld, was nothing to me in compariſon to my Soul's Redemption.* Oh! it was precious in my Eye, and to this very Day the living Remembrance of it dwells freſh upon my Spirit at this Time, and my Heart and Soul loveth the Lord, and bleſſeth his worthy Name for ever, and for evermore. And now the Lord is remembring the Covenant that many made with him in the Days of their Diſtreſs: Oh! remember, remember to pay your Vows to the Lord, and look into your Hearts this Day, and with the Light of the Lord ſearch and

ſee,

ſee, whether you are in Covenant this Day with the Lord or no? If you are, ſurely you are not this Day to ſerve your ſelves, but the living God, that made you for a Purpoſe of his own Glory, and redeemed you with his precious Blood.

And now conſider, you that are at Eaſe in your *Sion*, and eating, and drinking, and wearing what ſeemeth deſirable in your own Eyes, notwithſtanding the Honour of the Lord lies engaged, and your Souls in great Danger, and the Servants of the Lord diſtreſſed in your Behalf: Oh! for the Lord's Sake, and for your own Souls Sake, that will periſh, if you do not ſpeedily Repent, and ariſe and ſtrip your ſelves, and ſhake your ſelves from theſe Things and come away, while the *Call of the Lord* laſteth; Oh! linger not,

not, for the Day of the Lord haſteneth mightily, let nothing hinder you, make no Excuſes any longer, leſt you be excluded out of God's Kingdom, and the Door be ſhut againſt you; Oh! think upon it, before the Mid-night Cry come, wherein not one Day more will be afforded to work for the Lord: Oh then! Wife nor Children, Lands nor Livings, Huſband nor Trade, Gold nor Silver will redeem one Soul; then that doleful Sentence will be ſounded againſt the Rebellious, *Depart ye Curſed, Workers of Iniquity, into everlaſting Torment, prepared for the Devil and his Angels.* Oh the Senſe of theſe Things lie *very heavy* upon my Spirit, and truly bows my Heart in Reverence before the Lord, and Morning and Evening is my Heart afflicted, inſomuch that I can ſay,

as

as the Prophet ſaid, *Oh! that my Head were as Water, and mine Eyes as a Fountain of Tears, that I might Weep Day and Night, for the Unfaithful, that my Spirit might be eaſed:* For truly, Friends, though I am the leaſt amongſt many Thouſands of the Lord's People, and a weak Inſtrument, yet my Soul is concerned this Day, and my Prayers to the great God of Heaven and Earth are, *That he would be pleaſed again to ariſe, and utter his Voice, and thunder his Alarm from his holy Habitation, and make the Hearts of People to tremble before his wonderful Power, and that he will yet afford a Day, and try them again, and that his Trumpet may once more ſound an Alarm, to the awakening of their Conſciences out of that Spiritual Slumber, wherein many are ſleeping, and dreaming it is well with them, and*

that they are Rich, and Fat, and Full, and need nothing; when their State is miſerable, and wretched, naked and bare, and undone for ever, if they do not ſpeedily Repent, and return with their whole Hearts, and cry to God for Mercy, and that he will pardon their Iniquities, and heal their Backſlidings. Oh backſliding *Iſrael!* return, return, before it be too late, for the Lord hath long born with thee, Oh thou City of *Briſtol!* As the Teſtimony livingly ſprung in my Heart a little before thy Diſtreſs came upon thee, I was conſtrained to ſay, *Oh thou City of* Briſtol! *a City of the Mercies of the living God, he hath highly favoured thee; thou haſt had a Day and a Time, wherein thou mighteſt have inriched thy ſelf with the Treaſures of God's Kingdom, and mighteſt have grown ſtrong in the Lord, and in the Power*

of

of his Might, whereby thou mightest have ſtood in a living Teſtimony for the Lord, with one Conſent, as one Man; but now behold, the Days of thy Diſtreſs are at Hand, and thy Calamity like an armed Man; and now who can bemoan thee, or who can interceed the Lord for thee? Or who can ſay to the Lord, Why haſt thou ſuffered theſe Things to come to paſs? Becauſe it is in his Juſtice he hath done it. And bleſſed be his Name for ever, he is fullfilling the Prophecies of his Servants, whom he hath ſent early and late to proclaim his dreadful Day in that City, and Year after Year, and Month after Month, hath the Mind and Will of the Lord been declared, and Meſſenger after Meſſenger, inſomuch that many a full Stomach loathed the Honey-Comb, and all that ſeemed to receive it, made

not

not a right Uſe of it; for the Lord's End, in ſending his Servants in Days paſt, was, that his People might be fitted and prepared, that a Judgment or a Deſtruction ſhould not come upon his Children at unawares, but that they ſhould believe the Teſtimonies of his Truth, and take warning by it, and amend their Lives, and be bowed in Spirit, and humbled under the great God of Heaven and Earth, that your Prayers in this State might aſcend unto the long provoked God, whoſe Anger is waxed hot, and nothing will appeaſe his Anger, but true Repentance, and that with ſpeed, and true Brokenneſs of Heart: Oh! is this your State? Or are you this Day trampling upon the Teſtimonies of Truth, and upon the Sufferings of your dear Brethren

and

and Sisters, that are Sufferers this Day for the Testimony of Jesus, and are cruelly used? Oh! can you forget these Things? Come, put your Hands to the Work, and you Shoulders to the Burden, and cry mightily unto the Lord to spare a little, and give a little Time to renew your Strength in him, that you may do something for the Lord, though but at the last Hour; for surely Friends, the last Hour to many is very near; and the long Invited, if they miss of this Hour they will never have another Hour, to work for the living God; and therefore is my Soul concerned, and my Heart pained within me, and shortness of time is much before me, and therefore I beg it of you, that you will lay it to Heart, before it be too late, and consider how soon the Lord can call

call for your Breath; for our Lives here are likened to the Flower of the Field, as the Lord ſaid to his Prophet, when he ſaid, *What ſhall I Cry? Cry, all Fleſh is Graſs, and the Glory thereof as the Flower of the Field:* And I pray, how ſoon is that withered, and the Beauty of it comes to nought? And ſeeing it is ſo, why will People run the Hazard of their poor Souls, for that which will augment to their perpetual Miſery, World without End?

Oh! the Lord grant me my Requeſt, and bow his Ear to my Prayer; for I am very earneſt with the Lord, and my Heart is pained within me on your Behalf: Oh! it is you, it is you that ſhould have been as *Pillars in the Houſe of the Lord*, that the Weakeſt might have leaned upon you,

you, that your Courage and Valour might have appeared in the Sight of the Weak, that they might have been encouraged by it, that the Strong and the Weak might have gone up together to the Mountain of the Houſe of the Lord, where the Lord would have taught you of his Ways, and you might have walked in his Paths, and he would have fortified you with Might, Courage, Strength, and Valour, and your Bow would have abode in his Strength, ſo that you would have grown ſtrong in the Lord, and in the Power of his Might, which he would have given unto you in a bountiful Manner, had you wholly given up your ſelves, and all that God Almighty had given you, and gave way to that noble Spirit that was in *Joſhua* and *Caleb*, who were reſolved to follow

follow the Lord, they and their Families. Oh *Friends!* I can hardly write what ariſeth in my Heart, as touching this Matter; but in the Fear of the Lord, I have this to ſay, Your Eyes ſhould have ſeen the Wonders of of the Lord in a miraculous Manner, as they did that thus leaned upon the Lord, and truſted in his Strength, and believed in him, and then all Things were poſſible; and by obeying of the Command of the Lord, the Walls of *Jericho* fell: But if they had reaſoned with Fleſh and Blood, or thought the Inſtruments too mean, or conſulted with Reaſoning, they had never ſeen the Power of the Lord to do his Work, neither ſhall any now this Day, that reaſon with Fleſh and Blood: No, no; firſt learn Obedience, give up to obey the

Lord, and then your Eyes ſhall ſee the bleſſed Work of the Lord to be fulfilled in its due Time; for he is God Almighty, and All-ſufficient, therefore let every Heart confide in his Power.

So, *dear Friends*, keep your Hearts with all Diligence, for out of it are the Iſſues of Life; for we all well know, that the People that live moſt Chaſte, keep neareſt to the Lord, and they that are neareſt, hear moſt of his Counſel: And truly *Friends*, the Time is at hand, when all ſhall be diſtreſſed for the Lord, and the moſt Faithful will not ſpare of the heavenly Oyl; then it will be too late for any to go to buy. Oh! it often riſeth in my Heart, that yet a little Time, and Time unto many will be no more, for which my Soul is more concerned, than for any outward Suffering;

ing; for, ſurely *Friends*, it is in my Heart to believe, that the great God of Heaven and Earth, who hath been long provoked, and tried many Ways, and ſhaken his Rod over this Nation many a Time, and nothing will prevail, therefore will he ariſe in his Strength, and go through this Nation, and will afflict the Inhabitants thereof, he will bring Terror and Amazement upon them, that none ſhall be able to deliver out of his Hand; for he hath long called, and they have not regarded; he hath long held out his Hand, and they have not laid it to Heart, and therefore will their Calamity come at a Day unawares; and becauſe they have not regarded the Call of the Lord, when they cry aloud to him, he will not regard them; Oh! then bleſſed eter-

nally, and happy for evermore will all them be, that have obeyed the Lord in their Day, and have not their Portion with the Wicked.

So with my endeared Love unto you, and that beyond Utterance, desiring and praying for your Souls Prosperity, I remain your Loving Friend,

ELIZABETH STIRREDGE.

The second Day of the 1st Month, 1683.

A Faithful

A Faithful

WARNING

TO THE

Inhabitants of ENGLAND,

And Elſewhere: With an Invitation of Love unto all People, to call them to Repentance, and Amendment of Life; for by ſo doing, many have eſcaped the Judgments that have been to be poured down upon their Heads.

O *England! England!* the Senſe of thy Wickedneſs has been very heavy upon my Spirit a long Time, even many Months, and Years, and ſometimes hath

my Mouth been opened in the Fear of the Lord, to teſtifie againſt the Proceedings of the Inhabitants of this Land: Many has been my Prayers and Tears unto the Lord in ſecret for this Land of my Nativity; And ſince it has pleaſed the Lord of his infinite Goodneſs, that he has been pleaſed to renew his Mercies and Favours once more unto this Land, Oh prize it while you have Time, and walk worthy of it, leſt by your Unworthineſs you may provoke the Lord to Anger: Therefore haſten to Repentance, O you Inhabitants of *England*, and take up a Lamentation, and weep bitterly, and let it be for a Lamentation indeed; and bewail your former State, and miſpending your Time that is ſo far gone over your Heads; for your Sins have reached unto Heaven, as truly

truly as over the Sins of *Sodom* did, which the Lord deſtroyed, and repented not: And truly if there had not been a Remnant in this Land, that the Lord in his infinite Mercy and loving Kindneſs has redeemed out of the World, and the Wickedneſs thereof; and not only ſo, but they retain their Integrity, Zeal and Faithfulneſs unto the Lord unto this Day, whoſe Souls have mourned in ſecret Night and Day unto the great God of Heaven and Earth, that he would be pleaſed to bow his Ear unto the Requeſt of his Servants, whoſe mournful State is well known to the Lord, or elſe I believe that this Nation had been more miſerable than it is. And truly I can ſay, that my Heart is, and hath been for a long Time pained within me, and I have been concerned

becauſe of the Abominations of the Times, crying, *How long Lord will it be e'er thou wilt ariſe, and eaſe thy oppreſſed Seed, that mourneth Night and Day under the Senſe of the great Wickedneſs that lodgeth in this Nation, which has grieved the Souls of the Righteous from Day to Day, as juſt* Lot's *was in* Sodom: And theſe have groaned under it with great Agony of Spirit, and ſometimes very earneſt with the Lord concerning this poor Nation; and indeed I have been diſſatisfied, when I ſaw how things appeared in this Land of late Years: Oh! out of the Bitterneſs of my Spirit have I ſaid again and again, *Lord, be intreated for this poor Land, I beſeech thee, and take Pity upon the innocent Ones therein; for, Lord, if thy tender Mercies would have ſpared* Sodom *for Fifties, or Tens*

Sake;

Sake; ſurely, O Lord! thou wilt ſpare this poor Nation for thy Peoples Sake, for thou art God, and changeth not; therefore am I encouraged to cry unto thee, hoping that thou wilt be intreated by thy Servants. And truly can I ſay, that I had Satisfaction, and the Lord was pleaſed for to ſhew me, that that has come to paſs in this Land, ſome Time before it came to paſs.

And now in the Fear of the Lord, I have this to ſay to Profeſſor and Prophane, haſten, haſten to Repentance and Amendment of Life, Oh Inhabitants of *England*, for the Lord has long ſtrove with thee; he has ſhaken his Rod over thee many a Time, and he hath ſent forth his Servants early and late, and has endued them with Power from on high for to proclaim his dreadful Day, and the Day of his Ven-

geance : And the *everlaſting Goſpel* has been preached throughout this Land ; and he hath ſhewed his Signs and his Wonders in the Earth, as he did over *Jeruſalem* of old: What could the Lord have done more for thee than he has done, to gain thee to Repentance? And thou art not fitted for thy Latter-end: No, no, thy Account is very large that thou haſt to give unto the Lord, for thou haſt requited the Lord Evil for Good ; and for all his tender Mercies and loving Kindneſs, and his Forbearance and tender Compaſſions; notwithſtanding all this, thou art in thy Sins and Abominations, and going on in the broad Way which leads unto Miſery and Deſtruction, and the End thereof will be everlaſting Torment, World without End ; therefore remember it whilſt you have a little

a little Time lent to you, and how little none knows ; therefore conſider it, and lay it to Heart, and remember that there is a God in Heaven that ought to be feared ; for he is a juſt and righteous God, that will do righteouſly with all People ; he is no Reſpecter of Perſons, he regards the Rich no more than the Poor, but every one that ſerveth him, and worketh Righteouſneſs, is accepted of him, whether Poor or Rich : And this is that that will be required of you, a true Repentance, and that with Speed, and Amendment of Life ; true Brokenneſs of Heart, and Humility of Mind, and that in the Senſe of his abounding Goodneſs : Oh do but look back a little, and conſider, and ſee whether you can count the Mercies of the Lord that he has beſtowed upon this

this Land, both ſpiritual and temporal; no, no, they are paſt numbering: Well then, do you not think that the juſt and righteous God doth look for ſomething at your Hands; yes ſurely, Oh Inhabitants of *England*, *a Sacrifice of a broken Heart, and a contrite Spirit, and a Trembling at his Word*, will be that which will engage the Lord for to continue his Mercies to this Land; *Oh waſh and make you clean, put away the Evil of your Doings, ceaſe to do Evil, and learn to do Well: Cleanſe your Hands you Sinners, and purifie your Hearts you double-minded Ones.* For this know, that the Day of the Lord draws near, wherein he will be a ſwift Witneſs againſt the Wicked; and the Ungodly muſt be turned into Hell, where there is Weeping, and Wailing, and Gnaſhing of Teeth for ever; therefore

therefore look to it, I entreat you before it be too late; and fear the Lord, and dread his glorious Majeſty, for he will be a ſwift Witneſs againſt the Wicked.

And thou, O City of *London!* what ſhall I ſay to thy Inhabitants, that my Spirit may be eaſed? Oh fear, dread and tremble before the great and terrible God, who can daſh you in Pieces, and lay you as dead Men and Women before him; he will pull down your Crown of Pride, and lay your Honour in the Duſt: Therefore haſten to Repentance before it be too late, for the Lord has long ſtrove with you, therefore look to it before it be too late, I entreat you, and before the Lord pour forth his Vials of Wrath upon this Land, and his long Forbearance comes to an End, and his Decree be

ſealed,

ſealed, and the Angel of God ſwear by him that liveth for ever, and ever, that there ſhall be Time no longer. Oh then it will be too late, and then it may be poſſible that you may cry and call to the Rocks and Mountains to fall upon you, for to hide you from the Wrath of the Lamb, his Fury will be ſo great; and therefore whilſt there is a little Time afforded unto you, prize it; and prize the everlaſting Mercies of ſo great and gracious a God, that has bleſt this Nation with ſo many ſpiritual and temporal Bleſſings as he hath done: Oh let not your Unworthineſs draw down his Vengeance upon your Heads, after all theſe his infinite Mercies and Favours beſtowed upon us; my hearty Deſire is, that you may receive and embrace the Love of God whilſt it is proffered unto you,

that

that by it your Hearts may be ſeaſoned and made fit to receive his Bleſſings.

And this I have more to ſay to many of thy Inhabitants, Oh *England*, Be true-hearted one to another, and ſeek the Good one of another; and come down to Sobriety, let your Moderation appear unto all People; and inaſmuch as in you lieth, endeavour (you who have Power in your Hands) to ſuppreſs Wickedneſs, that Fruits of Chriſtianity may appear, that this Nation of *England* hath made a large Profeſſion of ever ſince I have had a Remembrance and Underſtanding of it, and I believe long before. Oh come now, let Fruits of Chriſtianity appear, which will be better than many Years talking of it; the Lord hath put a Day into your Hands again, wherein

you

you may do good; Oh make a good Uſe of it, whilſt you have it, leſt you provoke the Lord to take it out of your Hands again, and leave you in Sorrow to lament; then will your latter End be worſe than your Beginning, and your Account greater than ever, and your Meaſure more filled up than ever; and by ſo doing, will be made fit for Deſtruction. Oh, my Soul's Deſire is, that wherever this may come, that it may take Place upon the Hearts of People; for ſurely it is high Time for People to be awakened to Amendment of Life, ſeeing their Time is ſo far gone, that many have ſpent in Vanity and Pleaſure, which will add to their Sorrow upon their Dying-beds, when not one Day more will be left them for to Repent.

From one who wiſheth well unto all People, ELIZABETH STIRREDGE.

THE END.

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